Daily Report

Latin America

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FBIS-LAT-88-054 *21 March 1988*

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Cuba

Foreign Ministry Views U.S. 'Intervention'

PA201725 Havana International Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Cuba has demanded urgent action by the international community, especially the Latin American and nonaligned countries, to stop U.S. intervention in Central America and to guarantee the integrity, peace, and right of our peoples to decide their fates without foreign interference.

A declaration issued by the Cuban Foreign Ministry states that the independence, sovereignty, and freedom of each of our peoples are at stake in Latin America. The Cuban Foreign Ministry warns that the U.S. Government has taken new provocative steps. It also notes the deployment of troops to Honduran territory for the purpose of threatening Nicaragua and supporting the counterrevolutionary forces. After having been defeated, these counterrevolutionary forces now seek refuge in CIA camps.

The document also condemns Washington's shameless interference in Panama's domestic affairs. It similarly condemns Washington's totally illegal and unjustifiable economic aggression against that country for the purpose of eliminating Panamanian patriotic forces and establishing a docile regime that could allow it to perpetuate its control of the canal.

The Cuban Foreign Ministry document notes that the solidarity of the Latin American people must be strongly expressed in this decisive hour to force the United States to respect the inalienable rights of Panama, Nicaragua, and the other nations of the region.

U.S. Said Planning Invasion

PA200451 Havana International Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 18 Mar 88

["Our America Commentary," read by Norberto Hernandez]

[Text] A number of dangerous artificially staged elements are at the point of causing a general conflict in Central America, the results of which no one can predict. In the last few hours, as a result of the constant fighting near the Honduran and Nicaraguan borders, the White House suddenly decided to accuse the Sandinist government of violating Honduran territory. The U.S. Government consequently sent troops to Honduras in what could be considered as the beginning of a direct invasion of Nicaragua.

The artificial nature of the incident is based on the well-known fact that Honduras, where most of the counterrevolutionary forces are stationed, has allowed its territory to be used for constant aggression against its neighbors. The EPS has been carrying out a military operation in the San Andres de Bocay border areas since 6 March, and the Honduran authorities never mentioned any territorial violation. Furthermore, even after the United States said the incident had occurred, Honduras denied it.

After the undisguised U.S. pressure, however, the Honduran Government changed its position. The result was the immediate transfer of U.S. troops to Honduras to prepare for direct intervention in Nicaragua.

If one adds to this the destabilization campaign the United States is promoting in Panama and that country's current crisis, one can say the conflict is dangerously spreading throughout Central America.

Washington has left little room for the Central American countries to play an independent role. For almost 9 years it has politically, economically, and militarily harassed Nicaragua. For the last 10 months it has been trying to drown Panama while using the other countries to support its interventionist policy.

In this context [words indistinct] Costa Rica, which, despite its traditional neutrality, is helping the underhanded Yankee intention to deploy its troops throughout the region. It is useful to again mention the presence of almost 500 U.S. Army engineers who have been in Costa Rica for several months under the pretext of building roads and bridges that could well help the Southern Command, headquartered in Panama, to move its units to the other Central American countries.

It would be superfluous to speak about Honduras, because this country's government has placed itself at the disposal of the United States since the latter began its aggression against Nicaragua. If one views the situation as a whole, however, it is valid to insist and to warn that the conflict is spreading.

GRANMA 'Unmasks' Rights Activist Bofill

FL181327 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] GRANMA, on pages 4 and 5 of today's issue, unmasks the leader of one of the tiny counterrevolutionary groups, Ricardo Bofill Pages. The CIA and the Reagan government wanted its Geneva plan to isolate and humiliate the Cuban revolution, to have a fifth column in the internal rear guard just like the fascists did during their siege of Madrid.

GRANMA lays bare the history of Reagan's man. It shows the moral impoverishment of the brother-in-law of mercenaries and traitors who, from inside the country, served as vile instrument of the CIA and the Yankee interests section. The times have changed. The PCC's official organ has unmasked a leader [prohombre] in the manner of Ronald Reagan.

Further GRANMA Article

FL191509 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] The daily GRANMA today continues unmasking the true personality of the [word indistinct] counterrevolutionary leader Ricardo Bofill Pages. In an article in its center pages, the newspaper says that were it not for the repulsive twist given to Bofill's story as a result of his having sold his soul to the devil, it would read like a Spanish picaresque novel and would compete with the hazardous adventures of the Archipreste de Hita, La Celestina, or the Lazarillo de Tormes. However, to this literary genre's good fortune, GRANMA stresses, the life of this despicable liar has no relationship to it.

Further on Soviet Health Minister's Visit

Castro Decorates Chazov

FL171400 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, first secretary of the PCC Central Committee and president of the Councils of State and Ministers, has presented the Order of Solidarity to Soviet Academician Yevgeniy Chazov, USSR minister of health and Nobel Peace Prize winner. During the ceremony, Julio Teja, member of the PCC Central Committee and minister of health of Cuba, noted Chazov's work in scientific research as an eminent cardiologist, as well as his work against the nuclear arms race and for the welfare of mankind.

A fervent supporter of Soviet-Cuban relations, Chazov worked as medical adviser in the fight against diseases and viruses that affected our people in the early years of the revolutionary triumph. Teja also referred to Chazov's intensive efforts against the arms race, which led to his winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

Chazov in turn said he was thrilled to receive the award and declared that it symbolizes the union and close ties of friendship binding the Cuban and Soviet peoples.

Visits Lenin Hospital

FL180118 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Yevgeniy Chazov, member of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR minister of health, has visited the Vladimir Ilich Lenin Hospital in Holguin. During the working visit, an important program for the expansion and modernization of the hospital and the provision of technical equipment was explained to him.

The distinguished scientist, who was accompanied by Julio Teja, member of the PCC Central Committee and minister of public health of Cuba, was received by Miguel Cano Blanco, member of the PCC Central Committee and first party secretary in Holguin Province. The program includes the supply of medical equipment for the diagnosis and treatment of several illnesses and the exchange of specialists between the Lenin Hospital and USSR health centers.

The prominent visitor received here the Act of Holguin, the highest symbol of the province, in recognition to his contribution to the welfare of humankind.

Concludes Visit, Departs

FL181411 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Yevgeniy Chazov, member of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR health minister, has returned home after visiting us for several days and further strengthening Cuban-Soviet cooperation in the area of health. The Soviet academician spoke to journalists shortly before leaving, saying that the exchange of specialists is very important and that he favored its activation. He also said he was pleased with his visit and honored with the order presented to him by Commander in Chief Fidel Castro.

During his stay in Cuba, Chazov visited and viewed hospital and scientific centers, the family doctor plan, and Holguin Province.

Lezcano Receives Hungarian Party Delegation

FL151557 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] A delegation of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party [MSZMP] led by Mihaly Jasso, secretary of the MSZMP Committee in Budapest, has been received by Jorge Lezcano Perez, member of the PCC Central Committee and first secretary of the Havana City PCC Provincial Committee. They discussed the cooperation agreements existing between the capitals of the two nations. On 20 March, the distinguished visitors will tour educational, health, cultural, and scientific centers and projects under the purview of the construction minibrigades.

Rodriguez Llompart Arrives in Argentina

FL161439 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Hector Rodriguez Llompart, minister president of the National Bank of Cuba, yesterday arrived in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Rodriguez LLompart and his delegation will hold talks with Argentine Government officials. These talks will focus on bilateral relations.

Raul Castro Chairs FAR Cadre Meeting

FL181944 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Army General Raul Castro Ruz, second secretary of the PCC Central Committee and minister of the FAR, is chairing the first meeting of commanding officers at the FAR's Maximo Gomez-Antonio Maceo Order Academy. This important meeting will last until tomorrow, Saturday.

[Begin recording] [Colonel Jorge Guerrero Almaguer, "chief of FAR Ministry directorate," identified by caption] For our commanding officers, for these young people, most of them born during the revolution, who today with deep love and motivation devote themselves unreservedly to the constant strengthening of the combative capacity of our homeland and other brother nations, to be a FAR officer is truly their reason for being. [end recording]

Participating in this first meeting are more than 300 unit and subunit chiefs, political workers, and students from Camilo Cienfuegos military schools. Most of the delegates are young people whose average age is 24. Over the next 2 days, the conferees will examine problems that affect officers both during school and during their command. They will also discuss the educational process and the incentive system, particularly moral incentives.

Division General Ulises Rosales del Toro, first vice minister of the FAR and chief of the General Staff, spoke; he said that this meeting caps an important stage of analysis, reflection, and concrete results. It opens up broad vistas for undertaking a more systematic and rigorous application of the cadres policy within the FAR.

[Begin recording] [Rosales del Toro] A commanding officer must invest his military honor and professional and personal dignity in all his efforts to avoid being surprised by the enemy. The enemy cannot in any instance be underestimated, but we must make it respect our FAR and people completely. [applause]

The cease-fire order will never be given by any revolutionary as long as this implies surrendering to the enemy. The military man must highly value the military honor and the fighting tradition of the FAR, fulfilling his combat duties to the homeland until the very end. In the worst of extremes, should he become incapacitated and be taken prisoner, he will always uphold the honor and dignity of the Cuban soldier. [applause] [end recording]

Addresses Meeting Delegates

FL182359 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2032 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Army General Raul Castro has spoken on several occasions during the first FAR cadre meeting which began today in Havana and will continue until tomorrow.

The FAR minister and second secretary of the PCC Central Committee spoke to the more than 330 delegates who are participating in the event. He also ratified the decision to have all Cuban youths comply with active military service.

The debates will resume this afternoon with the analysis of a lecture entitled "Movement of an Officer Through the Service," presented by the Western Army. Among other subjects, the meeting has been characterized by critical remarks on the selection of future FAR officers who will be trained in the country's military centers.

Views Active Military Service

FL190240 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Army General Raul Castro Ruz, second secretary of the PCC Central Committee and minister of the FAR, is presiding over the first meeting of commanding officers at the FAR General Maximo Gomez-Antonio Maceo Order Academy. The meeting will end tomorrow. [passage omitted]

Raul made special remarks on the matter of active military service.

[Begin Raul Castro recording] I was also a soldier; not like you, but I was a soldier. Later I was sergeant, a lieutenant, and so on. We are discussing something that has already been decided on; it was already approved. It was even proposed and approved at the most recent UJC [Union of Young Communists] congress. That is that all youths should go through military service. A decision has been made on that, unless you are against it. We can present the matter to the higher organs of the party so they can reconsider it. Everyone, including women who can and want to serve on a voluntary basis, will go through military service.

Speaking of troops, we have two antiaircraft regiments, one in Havana and another one recently created in Guantanamo. Are you against the fact that all young persons should go through at least a year of military service? [Crowd responds: No!) Including the Camilitos? [Crowd responds: Yes!] (?What about women), should they serve also? [Crowd's response indistinct] Those of you delegates who were Camilitos, raise your hands. There are quite a few. Pretty soon we will have a Camilito as minister here, if he has gone through the military service. [laughs] [end recording] [passage omitted]

Haiti

Government Gives Assurances on Canadian Aid

FL182345 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] The Haitian Government yesterday again declared it would do everything in its power to make sure that the aid given Haiti by Canada gets to the people for whom it is intended.

The government said this while talking with the Canadian members of Parliament who have been on a fact-finding visit to Haiti since last Saturday.

This assurance was given the Canadian deputies by Foreign Minister Gerard Latortue. Latortue had, at the same time, stressed that the Haitian Government also desires to see the money given by Canada go to the people for whom it is intended—that is, to the Haitian people, to meet its most pressing needs in the spheres of education, health, housing, and nutrition. The foreign minister said that as a partner of the Canadians, he, too, had an interest in seeing that Canadian aid is not wasted and does not go where it shouldn't.

Further on Judges in Misappropriation Cases

FL182255 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Excerpts] According to reports circulating since yesterday, Examining Magistrate (Antoine Phanor) and Judge (Gerard Etienne) were fired yesterday, Tuesday. These two judges are accused of being involved in handing down rulings in favor of certain members of the Duvalier regime who were involved in misappropriation of public monies. These judges allegedly lifted sequestration rulings on property belonging to a number of individuals with important charges hanging over their heads. The property had been confiscated by the Haitian Government.

No official news has as yet leaked out regarding these firings. As for the judges, they are nowhere to be found.

Diverse questions are being asked, such as: Does this decision fall within the framework of a reform of the Haitian judiciary, which is currently crippled, and are these judges going to be called into court to explain their actions?

In a 1 March letter to the Parliament from six human rights organizations, the names of other judges came up, such as Judges (Lindsey) and (Thomasini). The organizations say these judges participated in handing down the lifting of sequestration rulings in favor of Messrs Merceron and Estime and Samuel Jeremie.

In another letter, dated 14 March, addressed to Prime Minister and Justice Minister Martial Celestin—these same six organizations, plus two more, asked the prime minister to clearly state his position on this scandal and to stop the issuance of such rulings from the courts of law. They also cast blame on the Foreign Ministry, reproducing a paragraph from a long 8 March 1988 letter to the prime minister from (Strook and Strook and Lavan) [the firm hired by the Haitian Government to attempt to recover public monies stolen by the Duvaliers and their entourage]. [passage omitted]

But to return to this matter of the judges involved in the lifting of sequestration on the property of the group of Duvalier cronies, we remind listeners that in the Information Ministry's account of the third cabinet meeting, on 3 March 1988, it was stated that the cabinet had noted with satisfaction that the rulings handed down in favor of certain former members of the Duvalier regime had not been executed.

The same account pointed out that judges bear full responsibility for the rulings they hand down in court. Finally, according to the Information Ministry's account, the cabinet recommended that the justice minister hasten to take measures to punish any illegal actions by a member of the judiciary.

Are the measures taken against Judges (Phanor) and (Etienne) connected with the cabinet's recommendations of 3 March? Also, why would these judges be so kind, so lenient, to the group of Duvalier cronies accused of misappropriating public monies?

This is a matter the justice minister should clarify. But when will he do this?

Former CEP Member's Passport Confiscated

FL181519 Port-au-Prince Radio Haiti-Inter in Creole 2100 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Mr Emmanuel Ambroise, whom everyone calls Manno Ambroise, had his passport confiscated this morning as he tried to leave Haiti for the United States. Manno Ambroise was a member of the Provisional Electoral Council [CEP], which was disbanded on 29 November, when the election, too, was aborted. His passport was confiscated at the Port-au-Prince airport as he was about to take a plane to the United States.

Mr Ambroise had been assured by the government now in power that he could leave Haiti freely and go anywhere he wanted. He was told that he would have no problems at all at the airport. That is what Interior Minister Yves Auguste had said, according to our information.

When we here at Haiti-Inter called to find out from the government what was going on, Martial Celestin, who is prime minister and minister of justice in the Manigat government, said that they themselves had issued authorization on Monday for Mr Ambroise to leave Haiti freely.

Interior Minister Yves Auguste confirmed this position.

We were not able to talk to the Interior Ministry about the Ambroise case. We were not able to reach them on the phone. However, we later talked to Emmanuel Ambroise. We learned that he did not wish to give us an interview. He did tell us that in a telephone conversation, Mr (Martol), secretary of state for the interior, had presented the government's excuses. He had told him

that he would have his passport this afternoon and that the head of the airport immigration service himself would accompany him to get his passport so that he could leave this afternoon on Eastern Airlines 1600 flight for Miami, which is already en route. We will have to check the airport to see if Mr Ambroise did indeed get his passport back and was able to leave.

According to what Secretary of State (Martol) explained to Mr Ambroise, upon presenting excuses, the problem was due to a misunderstanding on the part of subordinate employees, who had not properly understood the orders given to them.

In our talk with the prime minister, he referred to the matter of the people on the black list at the airport and said that for his part, he himself had ordered the names of Jean Claude Roy and Turneb Delpe taken off the list. These men had been prohibited from leaving earlier and their passports were confiscated.

Prime Minister Celestin said he had received the letter from Mr (Jean Robert Sabala), the former director of the BED/West [Departmental Electoral Office for the Department of the West]. (Sabala) has written two letters: one to former Justice Minister St Fleur and another to the current justice minister and the new government's prime minister, Martial Celestin. Celestin said that the Justice Ministry is studying the (Jean Robert Sabala) case.

As to the investigating committee established by the CNG [National Government Council] after the aborted elections of 29 November, Celestin said that he had not as yet, to this day, received any report on the committee and the investigation undertaken with regard to the 29 November elections, which were aborted amidst the shedding of the population's blood.

Concerning the business of the black list, he said that as his ministry investigates, the names will be eliminated. He told us this over the phone today.

Ambroise Allowed To Leave

FL191313 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1300 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] A former Haitian electoral officer, accused of trying to rig an opposition victory in November polls, was allowed to fly to Miami after airport authorities briefly seized his passport. Radio Haiti said Emmanuel Ambroise, a member of an independent 9-man council that organized the November 29 polling, left Port-au-Prince for Miami on a flight yesterday afternoon. Authorities had briefly seized his passport, barring his departure.

No formal charge has been made against any electoral council member, but in a newspaper interview, former junta leader Lieutenant General Henri Namphy accused the council of stuffing ballot boxes to assure an opposition victory.

Teleco Employees Temporarily Suspend Strike

FL182305 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Excerpts] The Teleco employees from the (San-Fil) office have decided to temporarily suspend the strike they began on Monday, 14 March. An employee delegation has met with one of the directors from the central office. [passage omitted]

This same delegation also met with the minister of social affairs in order to comply with formalities with a view to finding a solution to the conflict. [passage omitted]

Jamaica

Media Divestment Plan Said Behind Schedule

FL190140 Bridgetown CANA in English 2115 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, March 17, CANA—The government expects to divest the AM radio and television services of the state-owned Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation [JBC] by mid-April, Prime Minister Edward Seaga says.

The sale of JBC AM and television should be followed by the divestment of the JBC's three small local stations—two of which have been closed for almost two years—by the end of April, Seaga said. The government's media divestment plan is running several months behind schedule.

Under the programme the government is selling the JBC AM service and part of its television system, and plans to grant licences for two other radio stations and two television stations. One of the radio and one television station have been earmarked for religious broadcast, but action on these have been bogged down over what kind of information they can broadcast and the government's insistence that they not take advertising.

The government plans to retain the JBC FM and the major television transmitter to form the core of a new Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). It has put a price tag of J16 million dollars on the AM radio for which the purchaser will get a physical plant, equipment and transmitter capable of providing island-wide service with FM rebroadcast rights. For J17 million dollars the licensee for television, according to the plan that was announced, will receive a transmitter capable of covering 70 per cent of island.

Trinidad and Tobago

Central Bank Report Shows Economic Decline

FL170335 Bridgetown CANA in English 2311 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, March 16, CANA—The Trinidad and Tobago economy declined by 6.1 percent in 1987, according to the Central Bank's 1987 final quarter economic bulletin made public Wednesday.

Among the factors which provided evidence of the weakened performance of the econmy during the fourth quarter of 1987 were the continuing decline in domestic crude oil production, the adverse fiscal position of the government, and the continuing pressure on the country's foreign exchange reserves, the review said.

Total oil production fell by 9.2 per cent for 1987 over 1986 figures. Final output was 8,973.6 cubic metres. Usually lucrative marine oil production fell even further by 12.7 per cent 1987.

Central Bank said it anticipated a change in this trend as a result of changes in the tax regime for the oil industry introduced in the January 1988 budget.

Government spending fell by 10.3 per cent for 1987 over 1986. However, capital spending suffered mostly as a result of the cuts. A 75.8 per cent cut in capital spending brought the 1987 capital expenditure bill to TT211.2 million dollars (one TT dollar:27.7 U.S. cents).

Government was only able to cut its recurrent spending by 1.1 per cent-to 6.1 billion dollars—as cuts in day to day spending were offset by an increase in interest payments on loans.

Government also benefitted from increased oil prices which slightly increased over 1986 levels, meaning a 17.6 per cent increase in the value of oil receipts despite declining production.

The central government deficit stood at 993.6 million dollars—31.4 per cent less than the 1986 deficit, Central Bank said.

The Foreign exchange picture was a mixed one with Central Bank claiming final reserves of 322.1 million dollars left in the country—278.1 million held at Central Bank. Government Information Department, however, had said earlier this week this figure was 299 million dollars at the end of the year.

Central Bank said its final 1987 quarter reserves were affected by the usual influx of end of year request, an increased inflow from intra-regional trade, and an increase in the net investment balance due to the money drawn from the country's International Monetary Fund (IMF) Special Drawing Rights (SDR) pool. Central Bank said 117,000 dollars was left in that original 216.2 million dollars SDR account by the end last year.

On the less gloomy side, central government was extremely successful in raising money on the local market and a tight international market kept down external borrowing. Government raised a total of 730.8 million dollars in securities in the final quarter of last year—nine times the amount raised for the first nine months of the year.

The home market also proved to be lucrative for two companies making bonus share issues on the stock exchange last year and the semi-governmental unit trust which offered public share portfolios and achieved its highest ever quarterly sales level in the final three months of 1987.

Trinidad and Tobago also registered overall improvement in its trading. This showed in a 155.5 million dollars surplus with Trinidad's international trade partners at the end of last year.

Total trade between Trinidad and Tobago and its Caribbean Community partners for the year stood at 737.8 million dollars in comparison with 674.9 million dollars in 1986.

This country registered a 343 million dollar suplus—some 100 million dollars more than 1986—in its Caricom trading.

Trinidad also recorded surpluses with eleven of its Caricom partners, the largest surpluses with Barbados (123.9 million dollars) and Jamaica (55.8 million dollars) followed by St. Lucia and Antigua.

Consumer prices continued to rise. In 1987, overall prices went up by 10.8 per cent in comparison with the 7.7 per cent increase in 1986 and 1985.

The home market also proved to lucrative for two companies making bonus share issues on the stock exchange last year and the semi-government unit trust which offered public share portfolios and achieved its highest ever quarterly sales level in the final three months of 1987.

Police, Army Destroy $34 Million in Marijuana

FL171505 Bridgetown CANA in English 1454 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, March 17, CANA—Police and Army officials said on Thursday they had destroyed 34 million dollars worth of marijuana on Tuesday, one of their biggest finds ever.

Another combined security operation destroyed 64,000 marijuana trees, 16 racks of drugs put up for drying, and sacks and buckets of compressed marijuana in a south Trinidad forest, officials said.

The authorities have embarked on a crackdown on illegal drugs with a number of raids of marijuana forests.

Costa Rica

Madrigal Says Use of U.S. Troops 'Not Suitable'

PA181510 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Costa Rican Foreign Minister Rodrigo Madrigal Nieto said last night that he hopes and has reason to believe the Sapoa meeting scheduled for 21-23 March will not fail. Madrigal believes a process of negotiation leading to a true reconciliation agreement to grant freedom, peace, and democracy in Nicaragua will begin at Sapoa.

Concerning the sending of U.S. troops to Honduras, Madrigal Nieto said that anything involving a war escalation is not suitable for Central America. [passage omitted]

El Salvador

Parliamentary, Municipal Elections Held 20 Mar

Duarte Urges Vote

PA200334 San Salvador Television Nacional in Spanish 0203 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Speech by President Jose Napoleon Duarte; place not given—live]

[Text] Good evening, Salvadoran people. Tomorrow, Sunday, 20 March, we will write a new, brilliant page of our history in the consolidation of democracy and in the search for peace. Elections are an act of great civic importance during which citizens exercise the sovereign right of popular government. Elections are one of the basic pillars of democracy, because they provide the way for citizens, both men and women, to participate in the formation and activity of the state through their votes. That is why we are going to vote.

This participation gives validity to political democracy, because it represents the legitimacy of the power conferred upon rulers by the only owner of that power: the Salvadoran people. When a legitimately elected government places this power in the hands of the people, as we are doing now, there is no doubt such a government is practicing real, authentic democracy.

Democracy is not just a political system, however. It is a way of life that is forged in stages. It is a daily educational process. It is the exercise of individual and social rights in the search for justice, progress, and, finally, the common good, which is understood not just as the attainment of the greatest number of the material and spiritual goods needed for man's life, but also, and above all, as the defense of the rights and duties of each human being. Salvadorans, that is why we are going to vote.

It is necessary to realize that suffrage is a constitutional right and duty. The most important thing, however, is not the mere exercise of that right or the mere fulfillment of duty. The most important thing is the impact that right and duty have on individual, family, and national life. Suffrage represents a decision that defines and points out the people's destiny. Every citizen, alone with his conscience, votes with absolute autonomy and individually, because the vote is legally and morally inalienable and unrenounceable. That is why we are going to vote.

Suffrage is egalitarian, which is an improvement over the limited and discriminatory vote of the past. The votes of all citizens have the same importance and the same value. There is no difference in the quality of the vote. All contribute equally, even though their vote represents an individual, independent decision. This acquires its total importance when the votes, added together, determine the fate of the fatherland. We must not, because of apathy, negligence, or fear, allow others to decide for us. That is why we are going to vote.

For the first time, an autonomous electoral registry will be used. This will contribute to the purity of the elections and will be another step in the strengthening of the democratic process. There will also be many youths voting for the first time. In their own lives and biographies, they will stamp an outstanding, unforgettable date on which they will be taking a step in the new democratic fatherland we have begun to build. I therefore appeal to all, particularly those who will be voting for the first time: Let us go to vote.

It is important to emphasize that democracy is based on the people's participation in the nation's major decisions. For this reason, we are going to make this electoral event a true civic festival in which each of us will take our families, our friends, and our neighbors to participate, because this is also a way to educate ourselves about democracy.

Each of you should be encouraging others in your community—in the village, in the neighborhood, in the canton, in the countryside, or in the city, and all over our fatherland.

We must encourage people to vote. We must guide national civic behavior by publicizing the importance of saying with our vote that enough is enough. We say this to the instigators of violence and the enemies of democracy, who are the enemies of peace and, therefore, the people's enemies. That is why, fellow citizens, we are going to vote.

The role of the candidates proposed to the people by the political parties is of vital importance. The ideal is that citizens vote for the most responsible, capable candidates, because they have to be the people's true representatives. This is because once elected, they acquire an honorable undertaking and a moral mandate to work

untiringly for the benefit of their municipalities and for the country's progress. This commitment should be demanded by the people. This is what we have to defend, and that is why, Salvadoran people, tomorrow we are going to vote: so our fatherland can take the step to fulfilling our democratic desires.

Salvadoran people, thank you very much and good night. We are going to vote.

FMLN Raps Poll

PA181720 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Communique issued by the FMLN General Command; date, place not given]

[Text] In view of the upcoming elections, the people's interests demand a fair solution. The current electoral campaign is trying to sell to the people the illusion of a country where injustices are part of the past and where murders are committed by only a few mentally disturbed individuals. The people are witnessing an electoral campaign that shows the weakening of the government's political, social, and economic plans and the political power the government has flaunted.

There are no organized plans. The campaign is part of the whole, demagogic electoral farce. It is important to point out that these are supposed to be elections in which theoretically the people's delegates should be elected so they can rule the nation. Similarly, if these elections are supposed to elect local, municipal authorities, it is important to analyze the role played by the various sectors.

The existence of a civil war is the expression of the social protest of the masses. The solutions to the lack of social peace are not being proposed by the forces participating in the electoral carnival. Those forces try to act as if the war did not exist. Those are political forces representing sectors that have subjected the people to exploitation or which are serving as bridges for foreign control of the nation's destiny.

2. [figure as heard] These elections have the clear objective of legitimizing the process of U.S. intervention in El Salvador. These elections increase the denationalization of the Salvadoran state and turn people's attention away from the true solution to national problems.

The Assembly has been used as an instrument to [words indistinct] the economic package swindles and all the legal, repressive apparatus. The people's interests continue to be absent from the deputies' antipeople policies. The people have always been the main sector harmed by the Assembly's maneuvers. Municipal mayorships are instruments used by the warlike, political, military "United to Rebuild" plan carried out by the U.S. Pentagon.

That plan involves work by the municipal authorities to help form the paramilitary, repressive forces of the civil defense. They try to resolve the Salvadoran conflict by crushing the revolutionary, patriotic forces that struggle for a change in the unfair structures, which remain unaltered.

A realistic observation of the country's current situation is enough to discover the illegitimacy of the electoral process.

A) Lack of representation: This decade's elections have been characterized by an increasing level of abstentionism, which amounts to over 50 percent of eligible voters. This absenteeism proves that the joint efforts of all the reactionary forces cannot achieve their goal of legitimizing a seized state. The large number of Salvadorans who have left the country, the thousands who have been displaced, and the repopulated communities not included in municipal projects are facts that seriously question the alleged representation of the electoral process.

B) No territorial representation: Dozens of mayors and hundreds of municipal authorities are not administrating anything and are not governing anyone. Many mayoralties linked to the repressive apparatus have been swept away by the peoples army in many areas of the country. The authorities in those mayoralties have sought refuge with the military.

The people are constantly trying to resolve their own problems.

C) It is a controlled process: The U.S. CIA sponsors its favorites and uses all its resources to overcome the people's will and for its warlike, interventionist policy.

D) This process is an insult to the impoverished people: The national treasury provides millions of colones to political parties in payment of the so-called political debt, while hunger, misery, dismissals, and unemployment are strangling the masses. The waste of money on campaigns merely highlights the moral and ideological decay of those political parties, thereby revealing injustice and crimes against the people and the loss of national sovereignty.

Elections such as these represent one of the greatest mockeries of the people in the name of a nonexistent democracy; elections that in essence are undemocratic, because even though the government formally proclaims pluralism, the entire apparatus works systematically to repress those forces that, because of their ideas on social change and the ways to implement those ideas, are proscribed by the laws legitimizing the puppet state in compliance with Washington's instructions. These elections are one more way to legitimize state terrorism and psychological warfare against the people by means of arrests, searches, torture, and disappearances.

To ignore the fact that El Salvador is experiencing a process of profound economic, political, and social crisis is historically irresponsible. All patriotic sectors are obliged to participate in the search for a solution, which necessarily involves rescuing sovereignty and reestablishing relations of mutual respect and independence with the United States. Obviously, for the crisis to be resolved it is necessary for the most diverse sectors of society that consciously aspire to real democracy to come together. The revolutionary war is a genuine expression of that trend in the struggle for sovereignty, democracy, and the transformation of society.

The FMLN is a national, political, and military option that has been and will continue to be on the front line, spearheading the fight against aggression.

For sovereignty and self-determination! For the right of every person to life with dignity! For land for those who work it! For the right to health, education, jobs, and housing! The people's revolutionary war has made possible a political solution among Salvadorans in which the interests of the masses are not ignored. Without the people's revolutionary war, the outlook for El Salvador would be a road leading to death. Therefore, the people have the legitimate right to fight against these elections, since they are tools for the new-style dictatorship to impose its counterinsurgency model, and for the survival of the system of injustice and exploitation. Likewise, all democratic, patriotic, and progressive forces have the right and the duty to contribute to the formation of a new government based on national consensus. We call on the illustrious working class, on the entire popular movement, and on the people in general to strengthen their resolve to support the struggle and to participate actively in the armed struggle and in all other forms of struggle. Armed struggle and a fighting organization are the alternatives to the new electoral farce!

[Signed] FMLN General Command

ARENA Claims Victory

PA210448 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 0249 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Excerpts] San Salvador, 20 Mar (REUTER)—The right-wing Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) today claimed it had won the parliamentary elections throughout the country, in what represents a harsh blow to Jose Napoleon Duarte's government.

ARENA President Alfredo Cristiani told the news media that, according to his party's estimates, the ARENA candidates obtained 50-55 percent of the votes throughout the country.

The ARENA leader added that, nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean the victory will be evident at the National Assembly due to the system used to distribute the seats among the parties participating in the elections.

Nevertheless, Cristiani said the Christian Democratic Party [PDC] had not lost most of its 33 Legislative Assembly seats. Cristiani said that approximately 66-70 percent of the voters cast their ballot. He added that the PDC obtained 30-35 percent of the votes, and the rest were distributed among the six other parties. [passage omitted]

Armando Calderon Sol, ARENA's candidate for the post of mayor in San Salvador, this evening claimed victory.

Calderon Sol, accompanied by ARENA leader Roberto D'Aubuisson, issued statements to the news media and said he defeated President Duarte's son, Alejandro, who represented the PDC.

D'Aubuisson said that "on this occasion the U.S. Embassy did not wish to continue supporting whom it had created" (clearly referring to President Duarte).

Previous polls had predicted a victory for the right-wing ARENA.

Government Condemns 'Invasion' of Honduras

PA192351 San Salvador Canal Seis Television in Spanish 0200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Report by Roxana Lemus]

[Excerpt] The Salvadoran Government, through its Foreign Ministry, today condemned the alleged invasion of Honduran territory by Nicaraguan troops. The government said there will be a special meeting of the five Central American foreign ministers to evaluate the situation.

Deputy Foreign Minister Joaquin Maza Martelli said El Salvador is opposed to any invasion of Central American countries. He said, however, that the deployment of U.S. troops on Honduran territory because of an alleged Nicaraguan invasion is not outside interference.

[Begin recording] [Maza] I really oppose any interference in the domestic affairs of other countries. In this case, since we are talking about an invasion of a Central American country by another Central American country, it is an action that should be condemned by all Salvadoran people in general and by all those countries always calling for a peaceful resolution of all international conflicts.

Regarding the arrival of U.S. troops, I believe this is a matter of a very special relationship between the United States and Honduras.

[Reporter] Do you believe it is fair for our peoples that foreign troops come to intervene in the Central American peace processes?

[Maza] Look, El Salvador bases its foreign policy on a basic concept: nonintervention in the domestic affairs of other countries. Naturally, there also is a basic right:

legitimate defense. In my opinion, any country can use the means it considers most appropriate to guarantee its legitimate defense. In this case, I believe the Honduran Government is acting and will act to guarantee its legitimate defense. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Transport Stoppage '100-Percent Successful'

PA201525 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] There is a complete stoppage in El Salvador. Reports received by Radio Venceremos throughout the day indicate that the national transportation stoppage is 100-percent successful in El Salvador.

According to reports we have received from the capital, the main arteries of San Salvador were paralyzed as of this morning because of road spikes and oil spilled on the streets.

Other reports indicate that both bus terminals in San Salvador were completely empty. Moreover, the cities of Santa Ana, Usulutan, San Vicente, Chalatenango, San Francisco Gotera, La Union, San Miguel, and other department capitals reported a 100-percent transportation stoppage. We have also received reports from Cabanas of a successful transportation stoppage. The western regions of Sonsonate, Ahuachapan, and Santa Ana have informed us of a complete national transportation stoppage. The borders are closed. International traffic was suspended following the FMLN's call for a transportation stoppage in the 14 departments of the country.

As we continued to received reports of the successful stoppage, there was a nationwide operation to sabotage power lines, which has kept most of the national territory without power. The four eastern departments are without power following the guerrilla sabotage. Five strategic power lines have been blocked; therefore, the main hydroelectric installations in the country are cut off. The lack of power has adversely affected large areas of San Salvador, which is also without water because of the same sabotage on the power lines.

The guerrillas and the organized people throughout the entire national territory have been able to carry out this transportation stoppage and sabotage.

FMLN Ends Boycott

PA210333 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 0235 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Excerpt] San Salvador, 20 Mar (DPA)—The FMLN this evening announced that the transportation stoppage it maintained throughout the country for the last 3 days will end at 0000 Monday.

Shortly after the municipal elections concluded in the country, the clandestine station Radio Venceremos announced that approximately 10 vehicles were either damaged or destroyed during the 3-day stoppage, which was decreed 3 days ago. [passage omitted]

Reportage on Government-Rebel Clashes

4 Killed

PA181240 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] The latest clashes between the Army and the guerrillas have resulted in four dead and seven wounded. According to a Coprefa report, a soldier died and three others were wounded when their military vehicle was ambushed yesterday near Caserio Los Mangos, Chalatenango Department. The military report also said a guerrilla died and two others were wounded yesterday in a clash with Paracaidistas Battalion members in the Nejapa area. The report ended by saying that another guerrilla died and two more were wounded in clashes in El Pepeto, Tenancingo municipality.

Mayor Killed

PA181940 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1730 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Coprefa report; date and place not given]

[Text] Terrorists murdered the municipal mayor and attacked the patriotic civil self-defense quarters of Azacualpa, Chalatenango Department, today. According to reports, the attack occurred at 0200 today when the subversives entered the village and killed Sergio Romero, the municipal mayor of Azacualpa. The terrorists also inflicted serious damage on the quarters of the patriotic civil self-defense members, who repelled the terrorist attack.

Military Detachment No 1 reported the death of a soldier following a clash with a terrorist column in San Miguel de Mercedes, Chalatenango Department. In this action, the subversives partially destroyed the mayor's office, the justice of the peace's office, and the local Armed Forces command.

As a result of clashes between FMLN extremists and units of the Armed Forces, four subversives were killed in La Libertad and San Vicente Departments. Three of the terrorists were killed during a clash that occurred yesterday afternoon against cavalry regiment troops. The armed clash occurred when the soldiers were combing the surroundings of El Limon village, Santa Tecla jurisdiction, La Libertad Department.

Another subversive lost his life early this morning in a clash between a group of FMLN terrorists and National Guard members who were protecting El Portillo village,

(Camino de Ponce) jurisdiction, San Vicente Department. After the action, an AR-15 rifle with its equipment was confiscated from the subversive.

Moreover, two peasants were injured after stepping on explosive traps in La Union and Usulutan. One of them, Hector Perez Melgar, age 56, was injured in the chest after an explosive device went off on the road leading from Yucuaiquin to El Carmen Cantons, La Union jurisdiction. The other injured peasant was identified as Jose Alvarez Arevalo, who was wounded as he prepared to do his chores near El Mono hill, Jucuaran jurisdiction, Usulutan Department.

3 Helicopters Damaged

PA201830 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Three helicopters have been damaged in Morazan. The last hope of the gringos to keep the puppet Army on its feet is falling apart. Yankee technology is falling victim to the courage and creativity of our people.

Attention, attention please. Three helicopters have been damaged in Morazan Department, and an airborne troop landing has been foiled. We report that on Friday afternoon, two 3d Infantry Brigade companies raided areas under guerrilla control in the San Diego area, near the border between San Miguel and Morazan Departments. Those troops were attacked on Friday afternoon, and the clashes lasted throughout the night. The following morning, 19 March, the High Command [words indistinct] two transportation helicopters and a missile-launching helicopter, while carrying out an airborne troop landing in the Tijeretas area, Torola jurisdiction. The report indicates that our antiaircraft units damaged two UH-1H transportation helicopters. A third helicopter, a missile-launching UH-1M, was also damaged. There were a total of three damaged helicopters in Morazan.

2 Towns Occupied

PA190049 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Now a report from Chalatenango. Pay attention: The FMLN occupied two towns in Chalatenango. On the morning of 17 March, FMLN guerrillas carried out a successful political-military maneuver that included southern Chalatenango, San Miguel de Mercedes, and Azacualpa, as well as cantons and villages near these towns, located a few kilometers from the departmental capital of Chalatenango.

A report says paramilitary positions were attacked. First reports indicate that we seized from the Army 20 rifles, including 19 carbines and 1 G-3, in Chalatenango. We also seized a PRC-77 military communications radio, a 9-mm pistol, and a large amount of supplies and ammunition.

It is also reported that the mayor of Azacualpa was killed during the clashes. The mayor, who fell in combat, rifle in hand, was a member of Azacualpa's paramilitary groups.

It was also reported that our guerrilla units destroyed the mayoral office in San Miguel de Mercedes.

Guatemala

Government Willing To Aid in C.A. Crisis

PA181918 Guatemala City Radio Nuevo Mundo Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] In view of the latest events on the Honduran-Nicaraguan border, the Guatemalan Government would be willing to call for an urgent meeting the Central American presidents in case the situation worsens, presidential spokesman Julio Santos said.

We do not believe this meeting will be necessary because we expect the crisis to be resolved through the proper channels of diplomacy and negotiation. However, if it can be confirmed from the reports sent to us by Guatemalan Government observers in Tegucigalpa and Managua that there has been aggression by either side, we would be willing to cooperate in resolving the crisis, Julio Santos said.

URNG Announces 1987 Casualty Results

PA201400 Guatemala City EL GRAFICO in Spanish 18 Mar 88 p 3

[Text] Security agents confiscated pamphlets being distributed by URNG activists that listed the balances of their military actions and blamed official forces for murders and kidnappings. The message invited people to tune in the "Voz Popular" guerrilla radio station at 1700 today, "as something important" would be annouced. This station may be tuned on 7 Mhz, in the 40-meter band. The URNG claims that during 1987 they inflicted 1,407 casualties on the Army and "recovered" 49 Galil assault rifles, 4 rocket launchers, and 1 30-mm caliber [as published] machinegun—all during clashes. The pamphlets were distributed in various parts of the capital and the country's interior. Very few were picked up by residents, because the police confiscated them.

A military source denied the URNG claims, commenting that it is a propaganda ploy, because the URNG is losing the military battles, and they lack the support of villagers.

5 Czechoslovaks Caught With Weapons Shipment

PA201335 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1939 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Guatemala City, 18 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—A military source today revealed that the Guatemalan Army has captured five Czechoslovaks when they were illegally entering the country from Mexico with a shipment of weapons, presumably for the guerrilla groups.

The source, who preferred to remain unidentified, said the five Czechoslovaks were captured at an unspecified place on the Mexican-Guatemalan border, transferred to this capital, and confined at the Army's "Justo Rufino Barrios" general headquarters.

Upon orders from Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo, the five citizens of that socialist country "will be investigated to ascertain what cooperation they were giving to the Guatemalan guerrillas," the source stated.

The Army's press office has called for a news conference at 1600 (2200 GMT) at the general headquarters to present the arrested Czechoslovaks and reveal their relations with the rebels.

Honduras

Further Comment on Nicaraguan Border Situation

Azcona, Lopez Remarks

PA190033 Tegucigalpa Radio America in Spanish 2012 GMT 18 Mar 88

[News conference held by President Jose Azcona Hoyo and Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Contreras with unidentified reporters at the Presidential Palace in Tegucigalpa—live]

[Text] [Azcona] [Words indistinct] and local reporters. I will gladly offer all the information you need on the Central American situation, spoken about so much [words indistinct]. Please feel free to ask questions.

[Reporter] Can you clarify what has happened with the Nicaraguan Army over the past 24 hours? What is happening? A degree of confusion exists.

[Azcona] We have not helped create any confusion. EPS forces have entered Honduran territory. As soon as we learned of this penetration, we contacted the Central American presidents, including President Ortega, of course. We asked them to ask—pardon the redundancy—Ortega to order the withdrawal of the EPS forces from our territory.

We spoke with President Ortega and asked him to withdraw his forces from Honduras to avoid problems of any kind. We spoke with the Central American presidents on the afternoon of Tuesday, 15 March, and with President Ortega at approximately 1900 on that day. He told me then, at approximately 1900, that he had talked with his brother, Commander Humberto Ortega, and with the Nicaraguan chief of staff, and that they had assured him that no Nicaraguan forces were in Honduras. I again insisted that they were, that the EPS had entered our territory, and that he should immediately order them to withdraw, and that if they did not, we were already preparing for our Air Force to carry out a bombing operation inside Honduran territory to force them to leave our country.

This is the situation, more or less. Considering that this situation could get worse and that we have the obligation—I mean, the United States has an obligation with Honduras—to protect our integrity, I sent a letter to President Reagan on the night of 15 March asking him for help to cope with this situation.

We received a reply to this letter on Wednesday, telling us the United States was sending 3,000 troops. These are the troops that landed here, most of whom are at the Arelia Base at Palmerola.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] Mr Elliott Abrams has said that the Honduran Government had indeed asked for this aid but that there were several alternatives. Why did the government choose this alternative?

[Azcona] There were several alternatives. They offered to send us troops, an airborne squadron, and a helicopter squadron. This is proof of the presence and the immediate response on the part of the U.S. Government following (?a request) from the Honduran Government. We felt the immediate deployment of approximately 3,500 soldiers would be enough to show the Sandinists that the commitment the United States has with Honduras is serious. Furthermore, we wanted to increase the Honduran people's trust in its system and government and show them if Honduras is attacked, the United States is ready to give us the necessary help to stop that war. This is why we decided to request the deployment of those troops. This is proof we can count on the help of the United States to defend our territorial integrity and our (?sovereignty).

[Reporter] Mr President, apparently at the international level, Honduras' request for help is considered less than genuine. The Democrats have said this help is a disguise; that when Honduras asks for help, it is not to defend its sovereignty but rather to support the Nicaraguan counterrevolution. What does the government think of this consideration at the international level?

[Azcona] [Words indistinct] in the United States. For a long time it was said the contras were in Honduras and not in Nicaragua. President Ortega now says they [Nicaraguan troops] did not cross into Honduran territory but that they have been fighting the counterrevolutionaries within their own borders.

There are many contradictions. I do feel we are genuine. We have been very careful, and we have thought this situation out very carefully. Therefore, I am going to take advantage of this opportunity and ask the Honduran people to remain calm; the situation is being handled correctly and with the safety of the people and the country in mind.

[Reporter] Mr President, yesterday there were reports that during the first incursion into area 56, a Soviet-made helicopter was downed over Honduran territory. Can you confirm this?

[Azcona] A reconnaissance flight was carried out over the area yesterday morning. At 1400, after the weather cleared, four Super Mystere planes, loaded with two 500-lb bombs, and two F-5's departed from the La Ceiba base. The planes bombed an area within Honduras. We had been advised that this area was being used by a Nicaraguan helicopter. At around 1600, an hour after the first reconnaissance flight, a second flight was ordered into the area. Although they observed a column of smoke, we cannot guarantee that a Nicaraguan helicopter was actually destroyed. We can say, and this was reported by the pilots through the Armed Forces commander in chief, that there was some antiaircraft fire and that one of the missiles was fired from (?Nicaraguan) territory. This is what we can tell you of yesterday's operation.

[Reporter] President Daniel Ortega has requested an on-site inspection along the border. He has also asked the OAS and the United Nations to appoint a joint technical commission to verify the conflict and determine whether a Sandinist raid has occurred. How come your government has not accepted this?

[Azcona] I told him that not even within 5 days could a commission of the OAS or any organization reach this site, unless it came from the Nicaraguan side. I could take them there all right. He told me there were international reporters who could take them [words indistinct]. But we could not afford to spend 5 days waiting for an OAS commission, because our territory would have been violated during those days. We cannot permit our national territory to be penetrated at all. This is why we have our Honduran Armed Forces, part of which is our Air Force. We will not permit any violation of our territory. I think we have been very patient and that we advised Nicaragua of this situation well in advance. I feel they are advised, but we still have no proof that all the Nicaraguan troops have withdrawn from our territory.

[Reporter] I have two questions, please. Are there still Sandinists in Honduran territory? Two high-level U.S. Government officials, in a satellite conference, today said their government learned in advance of this Sandinist invasion [words indistinct].

[Azcona] I will answer your second question first. The Armed Forces had reported to me on the EPS' considerable mobilization at the Honduran-Nicaraguan border. As long as such a mobilization takes place within Nicaraguan territory, we do not have to take any action. They have every right to execute any and all mobilizations they want to within their own territory. We are dealing with an entirely different matter when such a mobilization occurs beyond the common border and their territory and when their troops enter Honduran territory. That is when we have to act, and we did. Hence our request to President Ortega that if they had already entered Honduran territory—we were certain of this while he said no—they should confirm this and give immediate instructions to their people, the EPS forces, to return to Nicaragua to avoid any trouble.

This request is still valid because, answering your first question, I do believe Sandinist forces still remain within Honduran territory. These forces occupied and controlled approximately 60 square km.

[Reporter] I believe the Armed Forces are able to expel the 1,500 Sandinists occupying our national territory. Why has U.S. military aid been requested?

[Azcona] The Honduran Armed Forces are among Central America's most professional forces. We have a limited number of troops. I believe our force does not represent even 20 percent of the EPS force. The presence of U.S. troops in Honduras is only a precaution, a precaution. [repeats himself] These forces are not going to be transferred to the border, but they will be here. They are only evidence that we do have the support of the United States in case the aggression increases and we should need these troops for operations.

For the time being, this is just a warning and a demonstration of U.S. backing.

We have said this before: It would take Honduras 4 or 5 days, at least, to reach by road the area where these events are taking place. This is why Honduran battalions would have to be flown in if they are needed.

We hope that common sense and intelligence prevails among the Nicaraguan leaders and that this measures will be unnecessary. We hope they withdraw from our territory as soon as possible.

[Reporter] How is it possible that the Honduran Armed Forces were unable to detect the attack by the Sandinist forces, considering that they included more than 1,000 men? How is it that they were allowed a 60-km incursion, as you have said, into Honduran territory without the Honduran Armed Forces reacting immediately? At the fifth meeting of Central American foreign ministers, there was the proposal to create an inter-American force to examine the situation at the border. Will you present this position at a future meeting of foreign ministers?

[Azcona] Regarding the penetration and the detection: Their mobilization was detected beginning the week before last, I believe, and I was advised about it. The penetration was not 60 km; the deepest penetration is 10 km. We have talked about 60 square km, not about a penetration of 60 linear km.

We are prepared to make whatever efforts necessary, at any forum anywhere, to have peace in Central America, but I will say again what we have been saying for a long time: What is happening is nothing but the result of a lack of understanding in Nicaragua.

We signed a document in Guatemala on 7 August, and all its deadlines are now behind us. We went to San Jose, Costa Rica, on 15 January, and we signed another document, which says conditions should be met immediately and without excuses. The conditions have not been met.

If there had been a cease-fire in Nicaragua, these clashes among Nicaraguans would have ended. If there were understanding among the Nicaraguans, we would not have to see our peace in jeopardy as a result of problems on the other side of the border. This is my answer. We did know about the mobilization in Nicaragua. However, as long as the mobilization takes place inside Nicaragua, that is a Nicaraguan problem. If they enter our territory, then it is our problem.

[Reporter] Mr President. I would like to ask you one question and to ask the foreign minister one. What impact will this situation between Honduras and Nicaragua have on the Esquipulas II peace plan? My question to the foreign minister is: Is it true Honduras has refused to go to a meeting in Guatemala to discuss the Honduran-Nicaraguan crisis?

[Azcona] I can tell you that, for our part, this situation has no impact on the peace plan. We agree to continue with the Esquipulas plan. We do not have any problems in implementing the plan so its goals can be attained. We have to speak clearly: On 3 February, the U.S. Congress voted against aid with the idea in mind that it was necessary to give the Esquipulas II peace plan and the possibility of an internal agreement in Nicaragua based on the plan a chance. But, it looks like the vote of the U.S. Congress has been viewed as a victory that relieved them [Nicaragua] of the obligation to comply with Esquipulas II. It can no longer be said the United States is helping the contras or that Honduras is helping the contras. Everybody knows that aid was suspended on 29 February.

Therefore, I feel this was the appropriate moment to reach an understanding with the leaders of the counterrevolution [words indistinct] and end this situation in Central America. I doubt if this will hinder the progress of the Esquipulas II plan. The problem is the lack of understanding on the part of the Sandinist government. The Sandinist government has not only refused to talk to its fellow countrymen, but it also has taken the liberty of violating another country's territory.

[Lopez Contreras] I would only like to say that the Central American countries have offered their good office to seek mechanisms to resolve the problem being experienced along the Honduran border. However, I would like to say that the invitation to an urgent meeting of foreign ministers was not scheduled in Guatemala. The meeting scheduled to be held in Guatemala next week is the monthly foreign minister's meeting. It was suggested, and it was agreed upon, that the emergency meeting should be held in Managua. I did not agree with this, and I said that it would not be correct or ethical to hold the meeting in Nicaragua because Honduran territory is (?practically) under military occupation by the EPS. Therefore, the foreign ministers should demand the immediate withdrawal of the Sandinist Army from Honduran territory. Likewise, I said that an emergency meeting, under these circumstances, would give international dimensions to a problem that is essentially a domestic problem, namely, the Nicaraguan civil war.

[Reporter] Mr President, what measures will your government adopt now that you have approached Commander Ortega but received no answer regarding the withdrawal of Sandinist troops from Honduran territory? In addition, Minister [words indistinct] announced, before you spoke to the reporters, that your government should decide what to do regarding this problem between Honduras and Nicaragua.

[Azcona] I want to tell you that we will not lose our temper at all. We will remain patient and calm. We have been assessing the effects of our Air Force operation yesterday. We are getting all the information about the Sandinists leaving our territory. If this does not take place today, maybe it will tomorrow. [Words indistinct] to reinforce our forces in the area. But we are not in any way acting hastily or taking false steps that could lead us to troublesome situations. We are acting calmly. All the Sandinists have to do is withdraw from our territory, cross the Coco River, and remain within their own territory [words indistinct]. Regarding these EPS raids into Honduras, Senator (?Taft) said—I think it was yesterday—that nobody could accuse Honduras of having a single Honduran soldier cross the Honduran-Nicaraguan border.

This clearly demonstrates our consideration. We will continue to act like this. We have already taken several security measures we hope will help us, if necessary. For this, we will not take any steps that could endanger [words indistinct]. They will arrive either today or tomorrow.

[Reporter] The presence of U.S. troops in Honduras has been spoken about a lot. Was this an initiative of yours or of the U.S. Administration?

[Azcona] We requested unspecified aid. We received a response similar to the ones we have received in the past. Forces were sent. A fighter [as heard] squadron and a helicopter squadron were sent to fly those forces to their targets.

We chose the first option because of its impact, as this people also must also know it has no need to fear a Nicaraguan aggression. In a case like this, we can count on U.S. aid; therefore, this is a demonstration that goes toward that confidence.

We do not rule out that a squadron of helicopters may come to transport our troops. Something like what was done in April 1986—at that time it was a little further down along the border, and we transported our troops by air. This is the reply. We did not make make a quick decision; we considered several alternatives, but the United States responded affirmatively to their compromise.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] with all due respect, what difficulty did you (?expect) from President Reagan? When was the subject of troops [words indistinct]? What was the reponse? What air strikes were made yesterday? What role of backup, support, or intelligence did the United States serve [words indistinct]?

[Lopez Contreras] We requested the aid. The full letter has been published today in LA PRENSA. Nothing specific about troops is mentioned. All we ask for is help. The response included other aid options and asked what we thought of rapid aid. This force was among those options. These forces will stand by [preceding two words in English]. They have arrived in Honduras, and they cannot act without the Honduran Government's authorization. These forces will be split between Palmerola, San Lorenzo, and Olancho, because apparently there is insufficient housing space in (?Palmerola).

This is their role. They do not have the task of invading Nicaragua or anything like that. I told this to President Ortega. I told him [Ortega] the last time we spoke that aid had already been requested and that the troops coming were not coming to invade Nicaragua, and that, in any event, they were coming to defend Honduras and Honduran territory if this were necessary, which is a different story. We once again proclaim that no invasion will leave Honduras against Nicaragua, but Nicaragua should stop thinking it can enter Honduran territory with impunity.

[Reporter] Mr President, a military source told us 1 hour ago that the situation has worsened during the last 4 hours, due to Sandinist penetration in the Bocay area. [Words indistinct] the Honduran troops? Is it true the situation has worsened during the last few hours?

[Azcona] The area they penetrated is very inhospitable and poorly connected with the rest of Honduras. It is easier to communicate with Nicaragua—I believe it is some 60-70 km from Bonanza, and some other places. Honduras has poor communication with that area. There are no villages nearby. As I said before, the Honduran troops that have been able to move by land will possibly be arriving in the area tomorrow. In case we receive no assurance that the Sandinists have moved out of the area, we will have to start thinking about the air transportation of troops to exercise territorial control there. Aviation is, however, the resource closest at hand. We shall again resort to it tomorrow if it is still determined that the Sandinists have not left. This means that [words indistinct].

[Reporter] How many troops have you sent there?

[Azcona] I cannot answer that question. It would not be right to answer it, but our operation—if needed—has not started yet.

[Question indistinct]

[Azcona] No participation. The F-5 pilots are Honduran pilots. I can even give you the names—I believe one is named Velazco, the other Lanza. The Super Mystere pilots are Hondurans. There was no U.S. participation in yesterday's operation. They were Hondurans using Honduran planes.

[Reporter] Mr President, I want to ask you about U.S. aid. Does this mean the Honduran Armed Forces are insufficient to defend the country? The other question I wanted to ask you is if there are prisoners or injured among the EPS captured.

[Azcona] No, no one was captured, because, as I said earlier, it was an air operation. Captures would be made when the land troops enter into action, if the EPS has not withdrawn by then, such as in April 1986. They have been given a reasonable deadline. When the airborne troops arrived at the time, seven Sandinist soldiers were captured, who were then handed over to the [word indistinct] diplomatic corps.

The Honduran Armed Forces are very professional, but relatively few in number. We have, I believe, some 25,000 soldiers, including the police that [words indistinct]. We do not have the artillery or the tanks the EPS have. I believe where we do surpass them is in our Air Force. That does not mean that we feel incapable of defending our own territory. However, if we can count on aid from other countries, why should we not accept it?

[Reporter] Mr President, you have said you are thinking of implementing new steps to avoid the entry of Sandinist troops into our territory. What steps could the government take so as to not allow the contras to enter, in compliance with the Esquipulas II agreements?

[Azcona] We are willing to comply with the Esquipulas II agreements. We have said this many times already, and we are complying. Measures to prevent the entry of contras into Honduran territory are nearly the same as those measures for the prevention of the entry of Sandinists. We would need some 15,000 to 20,000 armed men permanently on that border, and that we cannot do. [Words indistinct] the contras who entered seem to have been chased by the Nicaraguans. [Words indistinct] a few years ago it was said that there were no contras in Nicaragua—that the contras were in Honduras. They want them out of Nicaragua, but they want to chase them into Honduras. [Words indistinct]

[Reporter] Mr President, the Nicaraguan Government maintains the position that this is nothing more than another Ronald Reagan strategy to attack the Sandinist regime, and that if there is an invasion, it will be of the United States into Nicaragua. Were the people consulted about this? On the other hand, here in Honduras it has been asked why it was the U.S. State Department that broke the news of the invasion. Why was this news not given directly by Honduras?

[Azcona] The news was released by Honduras. The letter was dated 7 March. We have no reason to alarm our people. In the United States, things are a little different. In the United States, everything is broadcast immediately, without any reservations. We have handled this very carefully. There is a problem when we create fear among the people. It would have been much worse if we had gone into national network and given alarming news to the population. We are not going to give the news more exposure than it deserves.

There is an incursion, an invasion of Sandinist troops into our territory. Not a single Honduran citizen has yet been affected, because the area where the incursion took place is unpopulated. This supports our theory of how difficult it is to guard this border, in this case from the mobilization of a Sandinist regime, which does not respect us. This also gives us the right to request the needed assistance to enable us to have our rights respected. I think this more or less answers all your questions.

I thank you all. I have had a cold since Sunday and have not allowed time to get it cured. I had stayed in bed for 4 days, but on Monday I went to La Ceiba. [Words indistinct] we must not alarm the people too much.

We thank the United States, which rapidly responded to our request, allowing the Honduran people to be a little more calm [words indistinct]. We again tell President Ortega that we do not care what happens inside his border regarding the fight against the counterrevolution. However, our wish is that an understanding is reached so internal peace comes to Nicaragua. No way are we going to allow Sandinist soldiers to enter our country [words indistinct]

Azcona Interview

LD190147 Madrid Domestic Service in Spanish 2234 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Telephone interview with President Jose Azcona in Tegucigalpa by unidentified reporter in Madrid—live]

[Excerpts] [Reporter] Jose Azcona, president of the Republic of Honduras, good evening—good afternoon in Tegucigalpa.

[Azcona] Good evening.

[Reporter] At this moment what is the situation on the border with the neighboring country, with Nicaragua?

[Azcona] About half way along our southeastern border there was from the beginning of the week a penetration into Honduran territory by forces of the Sandinist People's Army. Although it is true that it's a totally uninhabited zone of our territory, it's also true that we cannot allow our border to be violated. When we became aware of this situation we spoke with the different Central American presidents and also with President Ortega to try to get them to leave our territory. It seems this was not done.

We then asked the United States for help, above all in order to be sure that in case of greater problems we could count on obtaining a response from the agreements we have with the United States. That's how the arrival of a contingent of soldiers from the United States arose. They in no way are coming to enter into the operation but as a response to the Honduran Government and really to demonstrate that they are ready to give some help in the case of a greater need.

[Reporter] Following up what you've said, Mr President, would you mind giving some details? You spoke of penetration. Has Honduras really felt itself...

[Azcona, interrupting] They took about 60 square km.

[Reporter] Did your country, Honduras, really feel itself invaded by the Sandinist forces.

[Azcona] Yes. I use that term although I think it is a term we do not wish to use too much because I don't think it's desirable to give the matter so much weight. But yes, it's an invasion even though none of the Honduran population has been affected, because, as I said, it is a sparsely inhabited zone.

[Reporter] Do you think there are violations of the border by the Nicaraguan contras quite frequently, too?

[Azcona] Well, the contras have undoubtedly entered and left Honduras. We cannot deny that. But we have also often said the contras are the product of a situation of a lack of democracy, or of a lack of understanding among the Nicaraguans. So we are merely the people who suffer those kinds of consequences.

I would like to tell you so you can form an idea—it's not easy to form an idea from over there—that the Sandinist government said the contras were in Honduras, not in Nicaragua, and now it turns out they are saying that Honduran territory has been violated in pursuit of the contras who they have expelled from Nicaragua. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] The fact is that Nicaragua has interpreted the presence of these U.S. forces as an imminent invasion of their country, of Nicaragua.

[Azcona] No, I told Ortega the last time we spoke that he could be sure that there will not be an invasion of Nicaragua by foreign forces from Honduras but that they must sort out their internal situation so they do not disturb our calm in Honduras, because that isn't right either.

[Reporter] When was the last time you spoke to President Ortega?

[Azcona] The last time I spoke to him was Wednesday night.

[Reporter] About 48 hours ago?

[Azcona] At 1600, less than 48 hours ago.

[Reporter] The UN Security Council is meeting now. What decision do you think might come from this body, the United Nations?

[Azcona] I don't know what can come out of it. There isn't much that can come out of it. They talk about a condemnation of the United States. A condemnation of the United States makes no sense. A condemnation for what? Because it is asked for help by an ally and gives it? Or because it's invading Nicaragua? None of this is happening. So I don't know what the UN Security Council can say in relation to this point. The only thing the council should say to Nicaragua is: Look, if you've gone into Honduran territory, come out, and that's an end to it all. No one is attacking Nicaragua. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Do you not think that in a way the present intervention endangers the very fulfillment of the Esquipulas agreements?

[Azcona] No. I don't think the fulfillment is endangered because no one is intervening in Nicaragua. All we are doing, all we have actually done, is have our Air Force intervene, the day before yesterday, dropping some bombs on our territory to make the Sandinists desist or to make them see that they cannot be inside our territory. And we are going to carry out an operation on land, giving them the opportunity to leave, to take possession of that territory. So we are not being provocative nor are we attacking Nicaragua; far from it. We want those negotiations with the Sandinists—I mean with the Resistance [Nicaraguan Resistance]—to succeed. The important thing is that everyone should make Nicaragua understand this: It won't be possible to establish totalitarianism in that region, and if there isn't a democratic opening there are always going to be tensions there.

[Reporter] This is our last question. According to your latest information has anyone been detained, in particular have any of the Sandinist forces been detained, who have...

[Azcona, interrupting] No there haven't. No, because, as I said, in that zone all we have are some small border posts.

[Reporter] Has anyone been injured so far, President Azcona?

[Azcona] Well, we do not know if anyone was injured in the operation carried out yesterday [words indistinct]. But I don't think Managua has reported any casualties from that action.

[Reporter] Jose Azcona, president of the Republic of Honduras, our sincere thanks for this live conversation just after you held an urgent meeting of your Security Council—a sort of crisis cabinet of your government.

[Azcona] No. We analyzed the situation and then there was a news conference for all the national and foreign press; there are a lot of them here in Honduras now.

[Reporter] Thank you for speaking to us. Good night.

[Azcona] Good night.

Army Spokesman on Situation

PA181948 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1755 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Interview with Army Colonel Manuel Suarez Benavides, public relations director of the Honduran Armed Forces, by Carlos Matute Rivera on 17 March; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Suarez] We are addressing you through this radio station to give information concerning the events taking place in the last few hours in Honduras and the rest of Central America. We did confirm the presence of Sandinist troops inside Honduras in areas already mentioned. The president of the Republic has not taken any public action through the appropriate Foreign Ministry branches yet.

I can tell you that President Azcona talked to the presidents of Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and El Salvador. He informed them of the problem and tried to find the core of the problem to avoid interrupting the peace process being developed in Central America. President Azcona talked to the other area presidents in the last few hours and he is still in touch with them.

In addition, a strict time limit has been established for the Sandinist troops remaining in Honduras to leave the country, because the political and diplomatic actions have already been carried out and the Armed Forces's duty is to end the violation of national sovereignty.

At present, the Armed Forces have deployed units in the area to repel the Sandinist troops still in our country, if necessary.

We must tell the Honduran people that the Armed Forces have kept the situation under control and they do not have to worry, because once all peaceful and diplomatic means are exhausted, we will not let the Sandinists troops continue their penetration and their presence in the country.

[Matute] Col Suarez, why did the Honduran Armed Forces take so long to release this information?

[Suarez] The Honduran people and the media, especially, must understand that this is a problem of the Honduran state and that as part of the state, the Armed Forces are subordinate to and a complement of the other tools of the president.

While the political and diplomatic actions develop, the Armed Forces have continued planning their military actions, which could be carried out if the president of the Republic orders them and at the time he considers suitable according to the powers the law and the Constitution grant him.

In addition, we always try not to alarm the population without need, because we know the Honduran people believe in us. People believe and accept what we say. If we take any initiative and we hinder the work of the president of the Republic and start giving reports that could harm the Honduran Government's efforts, we would be defeating ourselves. We always try to be prudent and sensible so that when we begin an action it is clear and forceful and not mere threats or speculation. That is why we kept silent in the last few hours. We were waiting for actions by the government and the appropriate orders from the president of the Republic.

[Matute] We understand that following a request by President Azcona, U.S. troops have been stationed at Palmerola here in Honduras. How does the Armed Forces view this?

[Suarez] That is correct. U.S. airborne troops and aviation equipment, including helicopters and planes, are arriving in Honduras. This is a reply to the Honduran Government's request for support.

This support is part of diplomatic relations that began during former President Suazo Cordoba's administration. These relations have been maintained because the United States has guaranteed and continues to guarantee that if there are foreign troops in Honduras, or a foreign aggression against our country, it would give us its support and it committed itself to offer that support.

We want to add that the United States should not only support Honduras, but also all other countries which through international treaties are committed to supporting and helping the actions of the Honduran Government if there is an aggression against our country.

I want to emphasize that this process has been conducted by the president of the Republic through his advisory and consultation organizations, and that the Armed Forces, which are part of the government, are acting in accordance with the decisions made by the president concerning the use of military resources, which is one of the resources the Honduran state gives to the government to fulfill national goals.

[Matute] Colonel, has General Regalado Hernandez met with Commander Ortega [not further identified]?

[Suarez] No, no. Right now all contacts are at the highest level, in other words, at a presidential level.

[Matute] Would you like to add something else, Col Suarez, especially in this case, which has kept the Honduran people under tension ever since they learned about the Sandinist invasion in Honduras?

[Suarez] Yes. I would like to ask the various sectors of the Honduran nation, especially the Honduran people, to remain calm and keep their trust in the Armed Forces, because we are acting with the calm and deliberation the circumstances demand. We are sure we can defend the country's sovereignty if it is attacked within the national territory, because the peace of the Honduran community can be endangered.

[Matute] Thus, the Honduran people can be sure that an armed confrontation will not have major consequences?

[Suarez] To say that would be to speculate. We must see how the actions develop. I do reassert the peaceful, nonwarmongering position of the Honduran Armed Forces. However, the Armed Forces firmly believe we will command respect for the rights of the Honduran state within Honduran territory.

EPS Helicopter Destroyed

PA181455 Tegucigalpa Radio America in Spanish 1323 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] The Honduran Government has admitted a Sandinist helicopter was shot down by the Honduran Air Force. The helicopter was intercepted in the conflict area, according to Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Contreras. The Honduran foreign minister stated that no U.S. military forces are involved in the operation. Honduran Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Contreras said the Honduran Air Force was able to carry out this operation, but he did not want to disclose if there have been any casualties. The following are Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Contreras' statements to journalists (Hernan Reyes) and (Edgar Amado Lopez) that we are broadcasting from RCN [Radio Cadena Nacional] of Colombia:

[Begin recording] [Reporter] Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Contreras has confirmed that the Honduran Air Force shot down a Sandinist Air Force helicopter yesterday afternoon. The Honduran minister also said the aircraft was inside Honduran territory.

[Lopez Contreras] The Honduran Air Force bombed the landing strip at Bocay, apparently destroying a Soviet-made helicopter parked on the landing strip, on Honduran territory. There was antiaircraft fire and Soviet missile fire from a hill inside Honduran territory. In other words, this confirms the military presence of the Sandinist Army inside Honduran territory.

[Reporter] Mr Foreign Minister, what measures will the Honduran Government take to safeguard national sovereignty?

[Lopez Contreras] Honduras carried out a second air operation, a reconnaissance flight, and viewed the damage done to the landing strip. We had reports that Nicaraguan gunships were flying in Honduran airspace, but when the Honduran Air Force arrived a second time, the helicopters were not there.

[Reporters] In other words, the Honduran Air Force is deployed to prevent further Sandinist incursions?

[Lopez Contreras] Yes, the Air Force is deployed right now, and we hope these men have left Honduran territory.

[Reporter] How many men?

[Lopez Contreras] I cannot disclose that information. That is sensitive information.

[Reporter] According to the statistics you have, how many Sandinists are reportedly inside Honduran territory?

[Lopez Contreras] Approximately 1,000 to 1,500 soldiers.

[Reporter] How many Sandinists have been captured?

[Lopez Contreras] We have not captured any. We know there have been ground clashes between Sandinists and anti-Sandinists.

[Reporter] Has the U.S. military who arrived yesterday participated in these Honduran Army actions?

[Lopez Contreras] Not at this time. All the operations are being carried out by Honduran Armed Forces personnel, mechanisms, and logistical support. [end recording]

Air Force Attack Confirmed

PA202111 Parama City ACAN in Spanish 1829 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 20 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Official sources in Tegucigalpa report that five Honduran "Super Mystere" aircraft attacked Sandinist military positions on the Nicaraguan border.

The bombing took place at 1455 on Saturday, in the sector of Bocay, which is located in Honduran territory along the Nicaraguan border. The aircraft did not enter Nicaraguan airspace, the source added.

A Honduran Armed Forces spokesman told ACAN-EFE that combat aircraft staged reconnaissance flights and detected the presence of EPS troops in Honduran territory.

"In complying with the instructions of President Jose Azcona Hoyo, the aircraft bombed Bocay sector. However, we have no reports concerning losses suffered by the invading forces," he added.

The military source stated it is not true Honduran aircraft attacked Sandinist positions in Nicaraguan territory on Saturday.

Managua claimed that four U.S.-made F-5 aircraft violated Nicaraguan airspace on Saturday and that one of the aircraft dropped bombs.

The Nicaraguan Ministry of Defense claims that the first incursion by U.S. aircraft occurred at 0830 (1430 GMT), and the second between 1935 and 2045 GMT.

A Nicaraguan Ministry of Defense bulletin reported that the fighter bombers attacked Sandinist positions in the sectors of Mukuas, San Andres de Bocay, Waniwas, and Wawayas, in northern Nicaragua.

On Saturday, President Azcona told a U.S. television network that the Sandinists have mined approximately 50 square km of the 60 square km of Honduran territory they occupied on 15 March.

Honduran Foreign Ministry spokesman Eugenio Castro told ACAN-EFE that five French "Super Mystere" aircraft with Israeli modifications attacked Sandinist positions in Honduran territory, and that they then returned to their bases.

On Thursday, two F-5 fighters and four "Super Mystere" aircraft bombed the Bocay sector in Honduras and Sandinist positions in Nicaragua.

Azcona warned last Friday that the antiaircraft attacks will continue until Nicaraguan forces leave Honduran territory.

The 3,200 U.S. troops, who were deployed to Honduras by President Ronald Reagan, are located at the Palmerola base and other infantry installations in eastern Honduras.

Honduran infantry troops are engaged in a combing and clean-up operation in the Bocay region, where some Sandinist forces are still presumed to be.

The press has not yet been able to reach Bocay to confirm whether EPS troops are in Honduran territory.

The Air Force and ground military unit commanders in the area are issuing official reports to Tegucigalpa.

National and international newsmen have not been allowed to travel to Bocay. This is because, according to the Honduran Armed Forces, the Sandinists have mined part of the territory they have occupied since 15 March.

Troops Deployed

PA181425 Tegucigalpa Cadena Audio Video in Spanish 1155 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Excerpt] It has been officially reported that the Honduran Army yesterday deployed infantry and artillery troops to Olancho Department, on the border with Nicaragua. The number of soldiers was not disclosed because of security reasons, but it was stated that it is enough to expel between 1,500 and 2,000 Sandinist invaders from Honduran territory.

The deployed troops are on red alert, waiting for the order to attack Sandinist positions in Honduran territory. The announcement was made by official spokesmen who asked to remain anonymous after it was confirmed here that at 1500 yesterday, the Honduran Air Force bombed positions of the invaders. [passage omitted]

Defense Maneuvers Begin

PA182055 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1808 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 18 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—The Honduran Army High Command has told ACAN-EFE that it began its land phase of its defense maneuvers, which began on Thursday with the bombing of Nicaraguan invading troops.

For tactical reasons, the military spokesmen did not reveal the kind of units or the number of men involved in the counteroffensive. The Army spokesmen also denied U.S. soldiers are involved in the operation, as a "Radio Havana" report heard in Tegucigalpa said this morning.

The Cuban radio report said the Sandinist troops had clashed with Honduran and U.S. troops and that they "even injured the Yankees."

One of the officers said: "The counteroffensive is being launched only by Honduran troops, which were deployed yesterday after the saturation bombing the Air Force carried out to clear the road and ensure minimun risk for the infantry."

He explained that the bombing, carried out at 1800 on Thursday over Honduran territory occupied by the Sandinists, "was highly effective and forced strong contingents to fall back toward Nicaragua."

The same source confirmed that "today patrol units of forces specialized in night, jungle, and mountain fighting are combing vast areas which were occupied by the Sandinists and were abandoned by them after the bombing."

Up until now, the Honduran troops have not encountered resistance, and it is believed they are only carrying out low-intensity skirmishes against Nicaraguan soldiers who were left behind in the withdrawal toward Nicaragua.

An Army officer said: "We can almost assure that ours is a search and cleanup mission, but we are ready for heavy clashes if an enemy left behind resists."

The officer clarified that there were no air bombings of Sandinist positions "because the reconnaissance flights did not show important targets for our planes."

However, the officer did not rule out the possibility of needing air support at some point for the land troops, who advanced "determined, but careful."

The Honduran military men said their "troops are highly trained, will act professionally before the enemy, and will respect the lives of all those who surrender."

The Army spokesmen asserted that up until now the Army has not captured any prisoners, because it "has not clashed with the invading troops."

Contras Ready To Fight

PA181338 Tegucigalpa Cadena Audio Video in Spanish 1242 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Report by Elan Reyes Pineda]

[Text] Radio America listeners, a few minutes ago we received official reports on the mobilization of Nicaraguan contras in Honduras. At this time, it is said that between 2,500 and 5,000 contras are withdrawing to the area known as Capire, El Paraiso Department, located 7 km from (Las Trojes). This area is the zone of conflict; that is, the area where the Honduran Army is also maintaining a permanent watch due to recent incidents. The Sandinists are trying to find the contras in Honduran territory.

Radio America listeners, we repeat: It has also been affirmed that Nicaraguan contras are stationed in (Nueva Palestina), Olancho Department. They are

almost ready to clash with the Sandinists; that is, with Nicaragua's EPS. They [the contras] are withdrawing after they were nearly removed from Nicaraguan territory. Although this is an unofficial report, it comes from highly reliable sources. This source has gone to the area where reportedly there are Nicaraguan contras preparing to clash at other points on the Nicaraguan border.

We repeat to our Radio America listeners: The contras are presently in Capire, El Paraiso Department, 7 km from (Las Trojes). Between 2,500 and 5,000 Nicaraguan contras are in this area. It has also been affirmed that another group of contras in (Nueva Palestina) are preparing to face the Sandinists. In fact, the Sandinists have done everything they can to drive the contras into Honduras.

RN Downs 3d Helicopter

PA181645 Tegucigalpa La Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1130 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Report by "border area correspondent" Bertino Seguera]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The latest report we just received states that the Nicaraguan Resistance [RN] is intensifying its battles in the zone south of Chontales Department, downing one EPS MI-17 helicopter in Santo Domingo, 40 km from the city of Chontales. The EPS has lost three helicopters: one grounded helicopter set on fire by the Honduran Air Force, and two downed by the RN using surface-to-air missiles. This is the latest report we have on the situation prevailing in the border area.

Nicaraguan Envoy Denies Break in Ties

PA182315 Tegucigalpa Radio America in Spanish 1953 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Telephone interview with Nicaraguan Ambassador to Honduras Danilo Abud Vivas from Tegucigalpa, by unidentified reporter—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] [Reporter] Have you been recalled by your president?

[Abud] Absolutely not. Keeping me here in Tegucigalpa illustrates my government's willingess to achieve peace and dialogue, to serve both my government and the Honduran Government, and to act as a bridge or communications liaison that will bring together the stands and will keep us from reaching a situation nobody wants, as nobody will know how this ends. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] How many counterrevolutionaries have been killed in the latest attack?

[Abud] The latest report I received indicates more than 400 casualties, including 92 deaths.

[Reporter] Nicaragua suffered 92 deaths?

[Abud] No, the counterrevolution.

[Reporter] Oh, the counterrevolution.

[Abud] The Sandinist Army suffered 102 casualties—32 were killed, and the rest were wounded. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] It was reported this morning that the Nicaraguan Government is planning to break diplomatic relations with Honduras due to the tension that has developed in the border area and to the latest incident late yesterday. Has this happened, Mr Ambassador? Is this going to happen, or are you trying to avoid it?

[Abud] Officially, there has never been any thought of breaking diplomatic relations with the Honduran Government because even the bombing incident has been blamed on the U.S. Government. The protest note from Nicaraguan Foreign Minister D'Escoto was addressed to Secretary of State Shultz, and due to Nicaragua's desire for peace, the possibility of breaking diplomatic relations with Honduras has not been contemplated. The conflict is not with Honduras but with the U.S. Administration through its mercenaries, who are attacking and waging an aggression against Nicaragua, which has already been condemned by the highest court of justice in the world, the International Court of Justice.

Nicaragua Refuses To Release Citizens in Jail

PA181549 Tegucigalpa EL HERALDO in Spanish 15 Mar 88 p 9

[Text) Colonel Efraim Lisandro Gonzalez Munoz, Honduran ambassador to Nicaragua, yesterday said, "not only have I not seen the release of Honduran prisoners being held by Nicaragua, but I am being prevented from visiting them." He said this when asked about the status of Hondurans being held by the Sandinists and the latter's compliance with the peace accords.

The ambassador said this is happening in spite of the Esquipulas II agreement, which was ratified in San Jose, Costa Rica, and provides for immediate and unconditional amnesty for political prisoners.

Gonzalez Munoz said there are 40 Honduran political prisoners, who were either members of the former Somozist National Guard or who joined the contra struggle and were captured. In both cases the prisoners have been sentenced to 30 years in jail.

He added that in spite of the fact that Honduras has submitted written evidence to prove that they are Honduran citizens, Sandinist legal and penitentiary authorities continue to consider them Nicaraguan citizens and therefore do not agree to release them on the basis of the amnesty decree issued by the Nicaraguan Government.

The ambassador said he had asked the Foreign Ministry and the penitentiary authorities to at least let him see the prisoners, including two who are in jail for common crimes, but that his efforts have been fruitless and he has been unable to visit them.

The Honduran ambassador said he is free to move about in Nicaragua within normal, logical prudence. That is, he cannot enter military installations or combat zones because prudence prevents it.

He added that on certain occasions the Nicaraguan progovernment press interviews him and that on these occasions his views have been respected.

Although he did not want to say whether the Sandinist government has complied with the Esquipulas II peace plan, he said the press opposed to Sandinism and the National Reconciliation Commission, headed by Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, do not mention the existence of a cease-fire, democratization, or amnesty, which are the three principle aspects of the peace accord.

Nicaragua

Officials on Border Situation, U.S. Troops

Ortega on Honduran Actions

PA191620 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1351 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Speech by President Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra from the Government House in Managua—live]

[Text] Good morning, Nicaraguan brothers. As you know, yesterday Nicaragua presented a protest to the UN Security Council. We also learned of the worldwide reactions rejecting and condemning the U.S. Government's aggressive, terrorist policy. We learned of the U.S. people's repudiation of this policy, demanding the withdrawal of the U.S. troops dispatched to Honduras, which are threatening our territory, our sovereignty, and the security and lives of Nicaraguans.

The Nicaraguan Government's attitude toward the Central American governments, particularly Honduras, is also known. Nicaragua filed a suit against Honduras at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, because Honduras permitted military, paramilitary, and terrorist activities to be staged by U.S. mercenary forces from Honduran territory against the Nicaraguan people for more than 7 years. The Honduran Government has become an accomplice in these criminal actions, which have claimed more than 50,000 Nicaraguan victims.

When the Esquipulas agreement was signed on 7 August 1987, Honduran President Jose Azcona asked me to request that the International Court of Justice [ICJ] postpone public hearings until the second presidential summit, which was scheduled to be held 150 days after the signing of the agreement on 7 August. In exchange, President Azcona gave his word, his willingness, to expel the mercenaries from Honduras and to take the necessary steps during those 150 days to dismantle the camps, radio [stations], communications centers, and logistical bases the Reagan administration's mercenary forces have in Honduras.

In view of that commitment by the Honduran president during the Esquipulas meeting in Guatemala, I agreed to his request on the International Court of Justice. That is, I agreed to postpone public hearings on the case. We advised the ICJ of this in a letter signed by President Azcona and myself. This letter was publicized when we announced the Esquipulas agreement to the world in Guatemala City. That commitment expired 2 months ago and the Honduran Government has not yet taken a single step to fulfill what we agreed upon. In other words, the Honduran Government has not taken a single step to fulfill its commitment; that is, to expel the counterrevolutionaries who occupy Honduran territory to attack Nicaragua. President Azcona has not done so. On the contrary, the Honduran Government has refused to receive the technical commissions of the United Nations and the OAS that were sent by the International Verification and Follow-Up Commission in November 1987.

The [Honduran] Government has systematically refused to fulfill the commitment it made in August 1987 and which was publicized in January 1988: to permit on-site inspection. It has rejected on-site inspection. It has done so verbally. In 1987, the Honduran Government said it was willing to have the on-site inspection, but when the appropriate steps were taken to have the on-site inspection, Nicaragua was willing to have the on-site inspection, but Honduras refused.

The Honduran Government has refused to demand that the U.S. Government, which is the one mainly responsible for all of these problems, withdraw its mercenaries from Honduran territory. The Honduran Government has not even dared to denounce the presence [of the contras] as a violation of the sovereign will of the Honduran people and the sovereignty of Honduras. It is an act of intervention on the part of the United States in Honduras.

In view of these incidents, and taking into consideration that Honduras is already rejecting that a commission be sent by the UN secretary general to Honduran territory, Nicaragua is facing a situation in which, applying international legal order, not calling in foreign troops—as has been imposed on the Honduran Government in order to escalate the war against Nicaragua—but calling on international legal order and international laws, the Nicaraguan Government has no other option than to reactivate the legal process against the Honduran Government.

As I explained, we had agreed to temporarily postpone for a period of 150 days—as of the date the Esquipulas agreement was signed—the suit we filed at the International Court of Justice.

In view of the complicity and active participation of the Honduran Government in the bombings and acts of aggression promoted by the U.S. Government, which dispatched troops to Honduran territory, and without undermining the threats by Honduran President Jose Azcona to carry out new bombings and ask for more, quote, U.S., unquote, support, I am instructing our representative at the ICJ to proceed to immediately request interim protection measures so the court will order a halt to any military action that could further heighten tensions between Honduras and Nicaragua, endangering international peace.

By taking this step, within the framework of international law, Nicaragua is once against defending international legal order. We know the Honduran people, a sister people, do not agree with this policy that affects Honduran sovereignty, which has caused destabilization among the Honduran towns bordering Nicaragua, where the mercenary camps have been set up. We are certain that the Honduran people will be able to understand and comprehend this measure by the Nicaraguan Government to resort to the ICJ so the conflict will not worsen and so there will be no Honduran or Nicaraguan bloodshed, as a result of the maneuver [1-minute break in reception] to exercise reflection, to reconsider.

I urge President Azcona to accept a delegation from the UN secretary general, in coordination with the OAS secretary general, which will conduct an on-site inspection in Nicaraguan territory bordering Honduras as well as in Honduran territory bordering Nicaragua. I urge the Honduran president and Armed Forces to take the appropriate steps to disarm and dismantle camps and bases of the mercenary forces in Honduran territory. In that way they will be contributing to peace, they will be respecting international law, and with those conditions there will not be any need to continue this suit at the ICJ against the Honduran Government's criminal acts.

Both the Central Americans as well as the international community are convinced that the U.S. Government is the one mainly and solely responsible for all of these incidents. The U.S. Government was already condemned by the ICJ. The ICJ told the U.S. Government that it should cease its acts of terrorism and aggression against the people of Nicaragua. If the U.S. President wants to be truly respectful of international law, if President Ronald Reagan truly wants to be respectful of the agreements signed by the Central American presidents on 7 August in Guatemala, he should order the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Honduran territory. Moreover, he should cease his aggressive policy against the Nicaraguan people and allow the continuation of the Central American peace process, so we can continue conducting the national dialogue in Nicaragua, and so we can carry out the meetings with the mercenary groups in Sapoa on Monday to discuss the cease-fire issue. We also hope the United States will be willing to hold a dialogue and talk with Nicaragua to discuss security matters and to reach an agreement in this sense.

At this moment, Nicaraguan brothers, when our people, our nation, finds itself threatened again by the U.S. Government's arrogant, aggressive policy, we must remain alert and continue our struggle-mobilization until this situation is overcome. We appreciate the demonstrations of support we have been receiving from all over the world, particularly from the U.S. people who are being repressed in the streets at this moment, who were repressed yesterday, who are being imprisoned, who are being beaten by the U.S. police simply because they are demanding that President Reagan's administration not turn Central America into a new Vietnam, which would bring about massive bloodshed of the Central American and U.S. people. We extend to the U.S. people our recognition, our greetings, in this struggle, this battle which we are waging for peace and for a future of friendly relations between our two nations.

Ortega on Honduran Lawsuit

PA191955 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1806 GMT 19 Mar 88

[News conference held by President Daniel Ortega Saavedra with unidentified reporters at the Olof Palme Convention Center in Managua on 19 March—recorded; broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Ortega] ...[words indistinct] reactivate the lawsuit filed at the International Court of Justice [ICJ] against the Honduran Government. [words indistinct] counterrevolutionary camps in Honduras. [Words indistinct] military sector, so we are compelled to resort to international law. Consequently, today I issued instructions to our representative at the International Court of Justice to immediately present [words indistinct] at the ICJ. I again urge the Honduran Government to stop increasing these military actions against Nicaragua and agree to meet in an international court.

Likewise, this morning I issued instructions so that a radio network—the present one was scheduled for 24 hours on a continuous basis—be established from 0700-0800, 1200-1300, and 1800-1900. In other words, we will establish three networks every day as long as this situation of alert and general mobilization prevails. Those three networks will be held to report the latest developments to our people. I have made this decision based on the country's situation. In other words, we cannot suspend the state of emergency because the emergency and state of alert still prevail.

We have also taken into consideration a proposal presented by the opposition parties when we met here. The opposition parties proposed that we establish a network, and we believe it convenient that the network be limited to those 3 hours for the time being. We will thus be able to inform the Nicaraguan people and report the latest developments.

Yesterday, we learned that President Jose Azcona said that bombings were scheduled to take place today in Honduran territory. We trust this is true. If any bombings are scheduled to take place in Honduran territory, they should bomb the mercenary forces, not the Sandinist troops. The only troops in Honduras are the mercenary troops and the U.S. Army troops, as you know so well.

[Question indistinct]

[Ortega] We have told the people and our forces to continue their combat operations against the mercenary forces. We have not suspended these operations. We have issued instructions for them to hold their positions within our national territory. In other words, we will not surrender our national territory simply because U.S. troops are threatening us with invasion. Above all, we are resorting to international law. We have asked the UN secretary general to call for a meeting so we may seek a solution within the next few days.

Moreover, we hope Honduras, which is now refusing, will agree and let the [UN-OAS] delegation visit Honduran territory, so the delegation can conduct an on-site inspection in the Honduran as well as Nicaraguan border area and then make the necessary recommendations so the conflict will not continue to increase.

[Reporter] Mr President, how do you appraise Peruvian President Alan Garcia's willingness to come to Nicaragua as soon as one Yankee soldier enters our territory?

[Ortega] Well, this shows the solidarity of the Peruvian people and their president with the Nicaraguan people. This is a Latin American stance of defending the interest of Latin America and the Caribbean.

[Reporter] What has been the reaction of [words indistinct] in view of the current situation?

[Ortega] Well, some member countries of the Contadora Group have expressed their opposition to this escalation, and have urged the withdrawal of U.S. troops in Honduras and the strengthening of [efforts to reach] a negotiated solution.

[Reporter] Have Nicaraguan troops totally withdrawn from Honduras?

[Ortega] Well, the troops in Honduras are U.S. troops, the contra troops, and the Honduran troops. Nicaraguan troops are in Nicaragua.

[Reporter] Have there been any special reports from the contras concerning the peace talks? Will they attend these talks?

[Ortega] Thus far, during the most recent contacts between Vice Foreign Minister Victor Hugo Tinoco and with Mr Jaime Morales [member of the Nicaraguan Resistance], they confirmed they will attend the Sapoa meetings.

[Reporter] When was this?

[Ortega] Well, this was yesterday.

Ortega Meets Opposition

PA192219 Managua Sistema Sandinista Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Excerpt] The meeting between the Nicaraguan opposition parties and President Daniel Ortega showed that a broad sector of the Nicaraguan people are concerned about the possibility of a U.S. intervention. The meeting was another effort by the government to promote the national dialogue as established in the Esquipulas agreements.

The meeting, attended by 16 opposition parties, was suspended after 8 hours of intense talks. During those 8 hours Ortega and the representatives of the opposition parties discussed the current situation. The meeting will resume at 1000 on 19 March. The representatives of the political parties condemned the U.S. Government's interventionist policy. [passage omitted]

H. Ortega Addresses Officers

PA190011 Managua Sistema Sandinista Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Defense Minister Humberto Ortega Saavedra read a letter to the EPS military operations chiefs today. The letter outlines the political significance of the EPS military offensive against mercenary forces. The letter says that the military offensive against the mercenaries is dedicated to heroic Nicaraguan women.

[Begin Ortega recording] I am fully convinced that this military campaign, which has been entrusted to you brother soldiers, will be a serious blow to the mercenary enemy, who is killing our defenseless children. It will be a victorious campaign that will accelerate the process leading toward the total defeat of the Somozist, Yankee beasts. They will once again feel the weight of the Sandinist bullets and boots in their hiding places. [end recording]

Honduras Bombs Positions

PA200121 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0055 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Two U.S.-made F-5 planes violated our national airspace today, overflying EPS positions in San Andres de Bocay, Waniwas, and Wayabas. They were repelled by our antiaircraft defenses.

The Defense Ministry reported a few minutes ago that the planes bombed our positions in Amaka, Bocay, 8 km inside our territory.

Protest Sent to Honduras

PA202235 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1417 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Managua, 20 Mar (DPA)—There has been increased tension between Honduras and Nicaragua after Honduran F-5 aircraft again attacked Nicaraguan positions and after the Nicaraguan Government announced that it will reactivate the suit against Honduras before the International Court of Justice at the Hague.

A second attack by the powerful F-5 aircraft, obtained 4 months ago from the United States by Honduras, was launched against Nicaraguan positions 12 km inside its territory, a Defense Ministry report stated today.

The attack at 1430 yesterday did not inflict casualties on the Sandinist People's Army, which has been deployed near Bocay from where it evicted more than 4,000 Nicaraguan contras who fled to Honduran territory last week.

The Honduran Government announced that the attack was to repel a "Sandinist invasion" against Honduras. The Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry released a protest note to Honduras after the second air attack, saying President Jose Azcona had "jumped the gun in bombing Nicaraguan territory, because there has not been any Sandinist invasion of Honduran territory."

Meanwhile, the Sandinist government, on reactivating the suit against Honduras for lending its territory to the contras, which are directed by the United States in the war against Nicaragua, [believes Honduras] is "an accomplice of the aggression," Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega charged when explaining the reason for pursuing the suit.

The deployment of Honduran troops to the Nicaraguan border is related to the bombings, which are a "serious provocation," the Sandinist newspaper BARRICADA writes today.

Contra Helicopter Downed

PA190138 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0050 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Managua, 18 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—An official source reported this afternoon that an armed [Nicaraguan] Resistance helicopter had been downed today in an area bordering Honduras.

A national network of state and private radio stations, ordered by the Nicaraguan Government since Wednesday, reported that the helicopter was shot from Nicaraguan territory and that it fell on Honduran soil.

At the same time, the source, citing the Defense Ministry, denied that Nicaraguan Resistance units had downed a Nicaraguan Air Force helicopter.

Nicaraguan antiaircraft batteries hit the "contra" helicopter in the same area where Sandinist troops expelled "contra" units toward Honduras during an offensive called "Danto" that started at the beginning of this month.

RN's Calero: No Decision on Sapoa Talks

PA192012 San Jose Radio Impacto in Spanish 1901 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Interview with Nicaraguan Resistance leader Adolfo Calero by Alejandro Acevedo on 19 March; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Calero] I would say the aggression is not by the Nicaraguans. It is by the communists, the Sandinists, against a brother country like Honduras. This is definitely not the first time the Sandinists have violated Honduran territory. Every time they get a little strength, they start this type of action.

The latest reports we have tell us the Sandinists have failed in their attempt. They were unable to achieve their objectives. They have caused a situation that has totally turned against them and, as is usual in these cases, they have begun to resort to the United Nations, to the OAS, and are even reviving the charges against Honduras at the International Court of Justice at The Hague.

The Sandinist troops have changed their tactics since yesterday. They had already stopped their [words indistinct]. They were after two liberty commandos [comandos de la libertad]. The situation has radically changed.

We have no news for today. There is little communication, but we can assure you that this attack has backfired on them.

[Reporter] Dr Calero, since we are talking about the Sandinist attackers, we are a few hours from the meetings in the border town of Sapoa. The question everyone is asking is: Will the Nicaraguan Resistance go to Sapoa?

[Calero] We are waiting to see how events develop. Currently we think that attending and facing the Sandinists is the best way to send a clear message of protest. However, we still have 48 hours before the meeting, and we will have to make a decision. I still cannot tell you whether we are going or not.

Wheelock Says People 'Will Not Yield'

PA181849 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0054 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Report by Nazarena Zeledon]

[Text] Commander of the Revolution Jaime Wheelock Roman, agricultural development and agrarian reform [MIDINRA] minister, has urged the people to continue defending the land, the organizations, and the press media belonging to the people. The revolutionary leader said: The people are on the offensive to increase the Reagan administration's isolation and we will not neglect the diplomatic peace offensive. He described the current situation as the climax of 7 long years of conflict. Commander Wheelock said the people will not yield to the reactionary leaders who ask for constitutional reforms. The people have the legitimate right to sweep the national territory free of mercenaries. Here are excerpts of the lengthy speech by the FSLN National Directorate member when he addressed MIDINRA workers, an occasion he also used to speak about the consolidation of that ministry:

[Begin Wheelock recording] There is a political offensive because our people decided that this year, after the Esquipulas agreement and the political space that was opened, they will resolutely defend the rights they as a people have achieved through the revolution. When the peasants say they will not yield an inch of land, it is because the peasants maintain an active position and they will not permit the return of an inch of land to their former exploitive owners.

We will defend our achievements, our people's (?organizations), the CDS [Sandinist Defense Committees], the CST [Sandinist Central Organization of Workers], and the ATC [Association of Agricultural Workers], our press media, and the principle that the communications media is not private property but is for the common good, the people, and the community. The government, the state is the one that can best represent the common good and the community. It was not in vain that we spent years fighting in the mountains, the clandestine trenches, the factories, and the neighborhoods to eliminate the Somozist concept about the communications media [words indistinct]. We now have a national television system and we are not going to give this up. The people are in the political trenches so as not to yield the historic opening they have achieved.

All of a sudden, some political parties have appeared with reactionary leaders who are like stone age dinosaurs. They ask for alleged constitutional reforms to change the nature of the state as if they had not lost their historic space. They are not in the government. The people are the ones who are in the government through their vanguard, their higher political expression that is the FSLN. [end recording]

U.S. 'Options' for 'Invasion' Viewed

PA200357 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1930 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Silvio Mora commentary]

[Text] Right after the triumph of the Sandinist revolution, Ronald Reagan and an ultraconservative, anticommunist team with great economic interests came to power in the United States. Many of them had ties with Somoza, who had just been removed from power. The Sandinist people's revolution therefore began to be treated in a brutal manner. We are not implying that any other U.S. president would have treated us with affection. Reagan and his team act more harshly, more cruelly, and more destructively toward the young revolution, however.

Starting in 1980 they began to lay traps and ambushes, to impose trade and economic boycotts, and to make slanderous remarks against Nicaragua. The Sandinist revolution was a bad example, and the United States intended to do away with it. Nicaragua was no longer the U.S. backyard, however.

Ever since the Nicaraguan revolution became a fire that the world's civilized countries have kept from being extinguished, the capitol and White House hawks have drafted evil plans to destroy it by force in the Rambo style.

That is why the gringos are discussing three options for a possible invasion of Nicaragua. According to the first option, they would invade the country. They know, however, that men and women here are ready and that the gringos would rapidly be defeated in any fighting at close quarters.

The second option is a direct attack on Managua, especially on military and economic targets. They know, however, that Managua is protected from top to bottom by heavily armed men and women. This would cost the soldiers of fortune dearly.

The third option, according to the gringos, would be an attack on the port of Corinto, where 40,000 people live and from where 85 percent of our exports are shipped abroad. They would block the port with warships to prevent aid from coming into Nicaragua from abroad. Since the mining of ports in 1984, however, we have been prepared.

At any rate, the gringo strategists may chose the option they prefer. That is up to them. We will be fighting here for peace and national sovereignty. We can also remind them of 1856, when they bit the dust in defeat; we can remind them of 1912, when General Zeledon made them respect us; we can remind them of 1933, when General Sandino made them flee after a shameful defeat; and we can remind them of 1979, when we expelled their proteges, headed by Somoza.

We do not want to fight a war with anyone, much less with the United States. We want peace, and we fight for peace. We want to live in peace to rebuild our country, but if the soldiers of fortune choose one of the three options, we will be here ready to shoot at our enemy's heart, if he indeed has one.

Contra Commander From Boaco Lays Down Arms
PA181450 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1416 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Report by Carlos Laguna Estrada from Rivas]

[Text] A 36-year-old counterrevolutionary commander from Boaco, who was identified as Scorpion, has laid down his weapon at the Penas Blancas post.

Upon receiving government documents, Scorpion said he returned to lead a new life and participate in the government's peace efforts.

According to Scorpion, he was active in southern Nicaragua for more than 4 years. Today, he regrets having fought against his people and has returned to live with his family.

Contras Ambush Truck Near La Palma, Kill 8
PA192237 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1930 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] As a result of their desperation, the counterrevolutionaries this morning ambushed a truck belonging to the (Piking Guerrero) rice producing enterprise in San Ramon, 8 km from La Palma. Eight reservists and workers were killed. The workers were going to La Palma to get fuel for their machines.

USSR Trade Developing in 'Decisive Manner'
PA201310 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 16 Mar 88 p 4

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] Despite the lack of trade relations between Nicaragua and the USSR prior to 1980, they are now developing in a decisive manner.

During 1981, it represented 13 million [currency not specified], and by 1987, it had reached 400 million, not including economic aid and donations.

This jump could be considered too sudden for a country such as Nicaragua, whose current exports do not reach $300 million, but this is not the case if it is seen as a boost of socialist assistance to a country who started its transformation process amid the crisis of its raw material prices and an aggression aimed increasingly against economic targets.

It is within this context that Aleksandr Chujrov, head USSR commercial representative, feels fairly satisfied when referring to the development and the trade characteristics between the two countries.

Blockade Hastened Relations [subhead]

Chujrov points out that the first exports to our country were based on requests by ministries, businesses, and organizations, which started a process of technological transformation, hastened by the U.S. economic, commercial, and financial blockade.

[Chujrov] "We started exporting machinery, equipment, and raw materials. The volume grew considerably after 1985 because of the U.S. embargo, until it reached a very high percentage; for example, the tractors used for crops such as cotton, basic grains, and others: A MIDINRA [Ministry of Agricultural-Livestock Development and Agrarian Reform] delegation is presently preparing to visit the USSR to look into the possibilities of expanding the variety of agricultural machinery."

Churjrov clarifies that they will try to adapt other machine technologies to the Soviet tractors, taking into account that the supply of equipment and spare parts represents the bulk of exports to our country.

Other items Nicaragua imports from the USSR are oil and its derivatives, industrial raw products, food, and diverse consumer goods. In addition, $22 million is donated yearly, mainly in wheat and rice.

A Firm Line of Support [subhead]

[BARRICADA] What is your opinion on the prospects of these relations? Is there a desire by the Soviets to strengthen them?

[Chujrov] "We have to see the figures, the head of the commercial mission said. In 1986 and 1987 we worked on the basis of the protocol signed in 1985, a document that established a 2-year term. In the third session of the joint commission, it was confirmed that the technical, economic, and commercial relations have a firm basis. Proof of this is the latest protocol signed for 3 years."

On the other hand—he added—at Gorbachev's meeting with Ortega the firm line of support to Nicaragua was confirmed, as was continuing to contribute to peace prospects."

[BARRICADA] But there are some abroad who believe the USSR is reconsidering economic relations with countries such as ours, who have started a revolutionary process in backward conditions.

[Chujrov] "The goal of our relationship with Nicaragua is to maintain our level of cooperation. We have even reaffirmed this during meetings with Nicaraguan leaders; donations will not be reduced, either. On the contrary, all Nicaraguan requests to expand the list [nomenclatura] of products are being considered by our organizations at this time to find ways to vary lists in keeping with agreed volumes."

Petroleum Supplies Will Continue [subhead]

[BARRICADA] Will the petroleum supply continue unchanged?

[Chujrov] "The annual supply of 300,000 tons of petroleum, which is an essential product, is also guaranteed."

[BARRICADA] In your opinion, how could Soviet aid be maximized?

[Chujrov] "We aim to increase or upgrade efficiency in the use of machinery and raw materials. In August, a work group from our companies came here and, after working intensively with various organizations, we found various possibilities for improvement by the two sides. It was also agreed that a group of experts will come to work with their representatives every year."

Aleksandr Chujrov explained that there had been a restructuring of organizations involved in Soviet foreign relations. The trade offices of the Foreign Ministry were separated and placed under a ministry dealing with foreign economic and trade relations. In view of these changes and the new role assumed by Soviet companies within the framework of perestroyka, we asked him if conditions for aid to Nicaragua will change.

[Chujrov] "The internal situation of companies and their self-management does not affect intergovernmental relationships, although, logically, the companies will be interested in ensuring that their equipment will operate normally and that they have spare parts and maintainance."

Progress in Assimilating Technology [subhead]

[BARRICADA] How do you evaluate the Nicaraguan companies' and technicians' assimilation of Soviet technology?

[Chujrov] "We had problems during the first years, because the users were not acquainted with the machinery, but the situation has changed. Manufacturing plants now send technicians to help the Nicaraguans. National cadres have been established through continuous work courses, and Nicaraguan technicians now help to prepare the requests for spare parts."

Advisers now help establish and equip repair and maintenance shops, and to organize their services. We have achieved much progress in this sector by continuously training their technicians."

[BARRICADA] Do you think the Nicaraguan state's reorganization will influence your cooperation?

[Chujrov] The tendency in the past was like this: If we brought 1,000 trucks—50 of which had been used for 1,000 hours—for the construction sector, and if the trucks broke down, a similar number of machines was requested instead of repairing them and providing them with maintenance. A considerable number of machines can be repaired, thus allowing credit lines to purchase other necessary equipment. In other words, we believe the goal now will be to optimize the use of existing machinery, increasing their efficiency, instead of seeking an indefinite increase of available machinery."

Chujrov adds that the cooperation will be aimed at achieving that goal, better preparing national cadres and organizing and improving the supply of spare parts by organizing their stock and controlling their use.

Support for Development [subhead]

Chujrov then adds with satisfaction that the Soviet commission which arrived in August confirmed the effiency achieved in the use of exported raw materials and the progress achieved in the process to assimilate technology.

[BARRICADA] Do you believe the differences in the two nations' development make it difficult to mutually understand problems?

[Cujrov] "We work with more than 100 countries; we have commercial relations that have nothing to do with political issues. We do not view the state of Nicaragua's development as an obstacle; this is why we are interested in helping to develop the economy in vital branches to increase the production of traditional and nontraditional export products."

Panama

Government Decrees State of Emergency

PA182219 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 2118 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Government Decree No 11 issued on 18 March]

[Text] Decree No 11 of 18 March 1988, which declares a state of emergency throughout the Republic:

The cabinet, exercising its constitutional functions,

Considering:

That for the past several weeks, the Republic of Panama has been subject to an attack on its economy by the United States of America in coordination with local political sectors seeking to take the government by force, with the obvious purpose of cancelling the gains made by the Torrijos-Carter Treaties on the Panama Canal, the

latest manifestations of which have been the freezing of public funds of the National Bank of Panama and other state and parastate organizations in the United States of America and in European countries; the application of other sanctions—economic and otherwise—by the U.S. Government; and the adoption of other arbitrary measures that affect public finances in a critical situation and have negative effects on the entire national economy, especially because of the campaign designed to deprive the Panamanian internal market of the circulating dollars needed for its normal activities;

That a true situation of undeclared war exists against the Republic of Panama, with a very serious impact on its economic activities, public finances, and all the structures of national life;

That the arbitrary freezing of the funds of the National Bank of Panama and of its depositors, ordered by the courts of the United States, have placed banking activities in a very serious situation, and have obliged the banking system to temporarily cease offering all its services, which has caused a profound alteration and disruption of public order, and prevents the normal course of economic and productive activities of the entire national community;

That political groups determined to disrupt the national legal life and public order have implemented a plan designed to deprive the civilian population of sources of staples and have carried out a broad-based campaign to induce citizens to withhold payment of taxes and tariffs for public services extended by official organizations, to which they have added a coordinated effort to obtain dollars and withdraw them from public circulation for the purpose of aggravating the emergency situation existing in the country;

That politically motivated monopolistic activities by adversaries of the government have resulted in a coordinated closing of commercial and industrial establishments and in the altering of staple prices in clear violation of Articles 279 and 290 of the national Constitution;

That disregarding Article 151 of the Labor Code—which establishes in the section on money that salaries must be paid in legal currency, that salaries must not be less than the minimum established by law unless a collective agreement establishes otherwise or unless the salary is for office personnel, that checks must be issued during banking hours, and that facilities must be provided so checks may be cashed during working hours—many businessmen have paid parts of the salaries of their workers with checks and goods without having demonstrated to any authority that they do not have legal currency to fulfill their obligations—this situation creates additional difficulties for workers, who deserve special protection from the state;

That the circumstances listed here force the national government to adopt measures to check the attacks on the national economy that negatively affect labor and enterprise sectors and that have produced a serious threat to peace as well as internal unrest that has gravely altered public order, which must be reestablished by measures and actions the Constitution authorizes the National Government to adopt;

That based on Article 51 of the Constitution, the cabinet has the authority to declare the entire Republic of Panama or part of it in a state of emergency and to adopt all the state of emergency measures considered necessary;

That the national authorities are obligated to safeguard the lives, honor, and property of national and foreign citizens, to promote a climate of peace so economic and social activities may be carried out normally, and to maintain public order whenever it is disturbed;

Decrees:

Article 1. Based on Article 51 of the national Constitution, the entire national territory is hereby declared in state of emergency.

Article 2. The executive branch will adopt suitable measures to safeguard public order to repel local and external attacks on the national economy and to face the state of emergency the country is enduring.

Article 3. This decree goes into effect today.

Let this be publicized, published, and obeyed.

Panama City, 18 March 1988

Signed:

Manuel Solis Palma, Minister in Charge of the Presidency

Rodolfo Chiari de Leon, Government and Justice Minister

Jorge Abadia Arias, Foreign Minister

Hector Alexander, Finance and Treasury Minister

Jorge Arosemena, acting Education Minister

Rogelio Dumanoir, Public Works Minister

Hirisnel Sucre, Agricultural Development Minister

Mario Rognoni, Commerce and Industry Minister

Candelario Santana, Labor and Social Welfare Minister

Ricardo Bermudez, Housing Minister

Francisco Sanchez C., Health Minister

Ricaurte Vasquez, Planning and Economic Policy Minister

Nander A. Pitty Velasquez, Minister of the Presidency

Noriega Rejects U.S. Proposal for Departure

PA192124 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2044 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Panama City, 19 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—General Manuel Antonio Noriega, head of the Panama Defense Forces [FDP], today rejected a proposal made by two high-ranking U.S. officials for him to leave his country, describing it as "inappropriate, unacceptable, and anti-Panamanian."

An FDP spokesman told ACAN-EFE that the offer was also rejected by the FDP General Staff.

The proposal, reportedly presented by William Walker, deputy assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, was for Noriega to leave power "with dignity" and go into exile in Spain. Sources at the Spanish Embassy here have said that so far they have received no formal request for asylum from Noriega.

U.S. Government spokesmen said that under the agreement being negotiated, the United States pledged not to request Noriega's extradition, although it would not drop the charges against him of drug trafficking and money laundering.

Noriega and the FDP General Staff met this week to discuss the details of the proposal, according to a military spokesman, who added that whatever proposals are made for resolving the crisis will have to be "in the national interest." The source added that Gen Noriega has reiterated his willingness to hold talks with all groups to resolve the political crisis Panama has been experiencing since early June.

The talks are taking place 3 days after an abortive military coup against Gen Noriega in which a group of mid-level FDP officers attempted to take over FDP headquarters.

Sets Conditions

PA192307 Paris AFP in Spanish 2224 GMT 19 Mar 88

[By Mike Gonzalez]

[Excerpts] Panama City, 19 Mar (AFP)—General Manuel Antonio Noriega, Panama Defense Forces [FDP] commander and the man at the center of the crisis in his country, has decided to step down but wants to set his own conditions for doing so, according to reliable sources.

According to several observers, the general has realized, after one of the most chaotic weeks of the last 9 months of demonstrations against his power, that there is no alternative, but he has decided to reorganize the Armed Forces before leaving. [passage omitted]

A leader of the opposition Civic Crusade told AFP that in exchange for leaving the country, Noriega asked for the right to reorganize the FDP, that no criminal proceedings be brought against him, that he have the option to return to Panama in the future, and that he himself choose his departure time.

According to members of the opposition, Noriega sent the message through Msgr Sebastian Laboa, the apostolic nuncio in Panama. Laboa has denied being the intermediary.

"I have also heard those rumors," Laboa said today in front of the nunciature. An analyst said that Noriega is "pragmatic" and that, after an abortive military coup on Wednesday led by former Police Chief Colonel Leonidas Macias, he has realized his days are numbered. [passage omitted]

Proposal 'Unacceptable'

PA210046 San Jose Radio Impacto in Spanish 2336 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Noriega is not giving up power. The Panamanian Defense Forces [FDP] consider unacceptable and inappropriate a U.S. proposal that Manuel Antonio Noriega give up power.

Meanwhile, a high-level source very familiar with the FDP said that an unsuccessful military coup against Noriega last Wednesday was more serious than originally thought. The source said that the attempted coup caused serious damage to the unity of the Armed Forces and that close to 100 officers might have been involved.

William Walker, deputy assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, left Panama Saturday afternoon after unsuccessfully trying to convince Noriega to give up power, said the opposition forces. They added that the talks failed because Noriega insisted on staying in Panama.

In the first public recognition that talks had been held between Noriega and Walker, the FDP released a declaration late Saturday stating that unidentified U.S. State Department officials had met with Noriega and submitted a series of proposals. The proposals were heard but rejected as unacceptable, inappropriate, and anti-Panamanian, said the communique, which did not describe the talks in detail and named none of the participants, except Noriega.

Stores opened Saturday for the first time in a week in most of Panama City, but soldiers patrolled the streets to prevent incipient demonstrations against Noriega. On Saturday, the government declared a state of urgency

[urgencia], leaving the door open to a possible suspension of constitutional guarantees. However, there was no evidence that the soldiers or the police, which have been repressing the demonstrators in Panama, had been very active in this respect.

Meanwhile, President Eric Arturo Delvalle incited insurrection by calling on the Armed Forces to unite and find a solution for a problem generated by Noriega and his corrupt clique.

Noriega Response Lauded

PA201950 Panama City Television Service in Spanish 1643 GMT 20 Mar 88

["Editorial commentary" from the weekly Panama Defense Forces program "Everything for the Fatherland": "An Honorable Response"]

[Text] There is a time in men's lives when actions, thoughts, and decisions go beyond the limits of personal interest—particularly when such actions, thoughts, and decisions commit the historical future of peoples, of nations, and their own identity as an honorable and sovereign country.

The accommodating decision, the docile response, the individual solution as the last hope are suitable solutions for people to whom shame and honor mean nothing. The easy path of saying yes is not the formula for those who place the interests of others before their own. The quickest path, which places kilometers, seas, and continents between men and the crisis, is not part of the firm belief that distinguishes patriots of stock such as Manuel Antonio Noriega.

Pompous last names, social classes exclusively for a few, or the tradition of a powerful family do not guarantee an honorable position when facing harassment, prepotence, and haughtiness from those who attempt to subdue men, peoples, and nations on behalf of democracy. No! Other less frivolous, materialistic, and simplistic characteristics are required. It is necessary to possess huge amounts of many other things that the envoys of the Anglo-Saxon superpower will never understand. This is perhaps the reason they continue to fail when dealing and making decisions with the Indian, mestizo neighbor with a lower level of intelligence.

Once again they are wrong. Who has been keeping track of all these errors that have determined the fate of nations and generations which have almost always ended up with fateful consequences?

They were wrong when dealing with Panama. They were wrong when dealing with an institution, and with a Panamanian—another very serious error by the formerly good old neighbor who has not yet been able to consolidate the proclaimed and long-desired friendship with the small and defenseless neighbor.

The State Department envoys who met face-to-face with the humiliated citizen and who sought, they said, solutions to the rapidly increasing national crisis—a crisis being encouraged precisely there, with the historically unforgivable complicity of some Panamanians—returned empty-handed to their own country.

Their proposal was not accepted. It was unacceptable; it was inadmissible; and it was not pro-Panama. On the contrary, the proposal was totally anti-Panamanian. Now the easy path is gone. The path of dignity, honor, and sovereignty is further opened to continue the travel toward the deadline, one responsibly agreed upon between two nations that should respect each other. We have not closed the path, and it will remain open for true solutions that consider the interests of all the Panamanian people. However, all those who suggest purely personal solutions that will not help resolve anything will leave empty-handed. This is the heart of the matter.

It is not a matter of personal interest, of comfort, or of happily passing the problem on to others. It is not a matter of going out through the back door. It is not merely saying yes, so that the pestering lies and the aberrant disinformation will loosen the clutches. It is not a matter of irresponsibly agreeing to conditions that downgrade and cause sadness. It is not a matter of yielding when facing demands to forget about it, demands based on false, nonexistent premises. It is not a matter concerning the well-being of the family, the peace of friends, old intentions, or slowly aging. No! Our dear friends, what prevailed in General Noriega's decision is the dignity of a man, a nation, and those who will succeed us; the dignity of the generational relay race; the dignity of our heroes, our martyrs, our forefathers, and our offspring. It was a historically honorable answer that some day, God willing, we shall value in its just and true dimension.

Military 'Could Try Again' To Oust Noriega

PA190154 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0002 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Panama City, 18 Mar (ACAN-EFE) — Several of the officers who participated in the failed coup against Noriega have not yet been "identified" and could try again at any time, one of the rebels told ACAN-EFE over the telephone today.

The officer, who is in hiding and who asked to remain anonymous for obvious reasons, said 90 percent of the staff were aware of the plot against Noriega.

The source said the attempt was frustrated when Lieutenant Colonel Leonidas Macias, now dismissed as chief of police, asked the commander of the Urraca Battalion, responsible for the security of the General Command and General Noriega himself, to join the plotters.

The officer said that other military men assigned to other garrisons also participated in the plot, but failed to act at the right moment out of fear.

He also said Macias showed up unarmed at the Urraca Battalion's headquarters. The battalion commander took advantage of this to point a gun at Macias and to take him to the commander in chief's office at once.

The military man said that only 1 hour earlier, Macias and a group of majors had met with staff members, whom he did not identify and who said they would join the rebellion.

He also said that Noriega, after learning that the Urraca Battalion commander controlled the rebels, headed for the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] headquarters to verify what the situation was.

He said the rebels intended to overthrow Noriega and to present two alternatives to resolve the political and economic crisis Panama has been facing since June.

According to the officer, the alternatives were either to obey the decision of Eric Arturo Delvalle, now deposed president of the Republic, to remove Noriega from his post as commander in chief or to establish a government junta comprised of honorable citizens. [passage omitted]

Noriega Appoints, Transfers FDP Officers

PA190128 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 0032 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Panama City, 18 Mar (DPA)—General Manuel Antonio Noriega, commander in chief of the Panama Defense Force (FDP), has appointed Lieutenant Colonel Ero Ramiro Cal chief of the National Police to replace Colonel Leonidas Macias, who headed the foiled military coup against Noriega 2 days ago.

Noriega made other important changes in the military leadership. He appointed Colonel Teodoro Alexander commander of the Panamanian Air Force to replace Colonel Lorenzo Purcell, who was transferred with the same rank to the FDP Central Headquarters' Command Post. Lorenzo Purcell is the brother of Colonel Alberto Purcell, who forms part of the FDP staff.

Colonel Marcos Justines has been confirmed as chief of staff. Justines is the officer who was appointed FDP commander in chief 3 weeks ago by deposed President Eric Arturo Delvalle. Justines remained loyal to Noriega and did not accept the post.

Another appointment made by Noriega today was that of Colonel Guillermo Wong, who is replacing former National Security Commander Colonel Bernardo Barrera. Barrera was one of the officers who tried to overthrow Noriega 2 days ago.

It has been reported that another officer involved with the attempted coup, Major Augusto Villalaz, sought refuge at the U.S. Embassy in Panama and that Majors Ramon Anel Adames and Carlos Argona are fugitives. These two majors participated in the foiled coup.

The secretary general of the Institute of Hydraulic Resources and Electrification's labor union, Isaac Rodriguez, who was responsible for suspending electrical service to Panama for more than 24 hours this past Wednesday, sought refuge at the Spanish Embassy after having been accused of sabotage.

Isolated protests against the government of President Manuel Solis Palma and Gen Manuel Antonio Noriega continued today in Panama City, but they were less intense than those earlier this week.

The government has announced that a salary-percentage payment has been made to the country's 120,000 public employees. The Federation of Public Employees has reported that the state has paid only 40 percent of each salary. The government will need $36 million to cover salaries earned during the second half of March, in addition to the $24 million it will owe from this first half.

The Defense Forces today maintained general control throughout the country, and the decree militarizing public institutions was implemented.

Meanwhile, the Civic Crusade, which comprises more than 100 industrial, business, labor, and student organizations, has announced that it is preparing a big national demonstration for next week to demand Gen Noriega's resignation.

Civic Crusade Calls for 'Indefinite' Strike

PA190220 San Jose Radio Impacto in Spanish 0147 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Communique issued by the National Civic Crusade in Panama City on 18 March]

[Text] The serious situation the country has experienced over the past 9 months, which in the past 3 weeks has turned into total chaos as a result of dictator Noriega's decision to remain in power and the measures adopted by his government, has today ended with the imposition of a state of emergency. This measure is only a vain attempt to silence the protests of the Panamanian people who, backed by the National Civic Crusade, are demanding justice, freedom, and democracy.

Since it is necessary to end the catastrophic national situation that is dramatically affecting the poorest sectors, the National Civic Crusade is calling an indefinite general strike, with the participation of all the sectors of the country, for Monday, 21 March 1988. This general strike is aimed at achieving the deep political changes the people are demanding and can only be achieved with General Noriega's immediate departure.

Likewise, the National Civic Crusade makes a special call to the officers and rank and file of the Defense Forces to listen to the people's voices and to support the principle that all institutions must obey the Constitution and the laws. The survival of the nation depends on their fidelity to the homeland.

Panama City, 18 March 1988

Signed, National Civic Crusade

'All Sectors' To Participate

PA210135 San Jose Radio Impacto in Spanish 2250 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Interview with Alberto Boyd, president of the National Council of Private Enterprise, CONEP, by correspondent Homero Londono; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Boyd] All of the Civic Crusade's sectors will be participating in Monday's strike. The Civic Crusade has convoked this general strike and will call it off once General Manuel Antonio Noriega leaves the country.

[Londono] Why was the strike called?

[Boyd] Because the country is being destroyed; the people of Panama are hungry. This is our solution to the political problem in Panama.

[Londono] Have you heard from the sectors that did not support the strikes in the past?

[Boyd] This strike is being supported by all the sectors of the country; all the sectors agreed to go on strike.

Police To Implement Measures

PA210343 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 0300 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Communique issued by Panama City Police Force Commander Eros Ramiro Cal in Panama City on 20 March]

[Text] A broad and coordinated security and vigilance operation will be implemented within the next few hours, on Monday, in the main trade areas of the capital city to guarantee the free and normal functioning of the commercial establishments that will open to the public as usual.

Likewise, the Police Command guarantees the safety of all citizens to freely circulate on the streets and avenues of the city and vicinity, thus allowing them to make their purchases as usual and to meet their daily commitments in the capital.

Public Workers Face Dismissal

PA210515 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 0435 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Decree No 6 issued by Manuel Solis Palma, minister in charge of the Presidency, in Panama City on 20 March]

[Text] Article 1: Government employees who work for those institutions mentioned in Decree No 23 of 16 March 1988 who suspend their work or declare strikes, be this an individual or group suspension, will be removed from office and temporarily suspended while the authorities carry out the appropriate investigations. After the case is investigated, the authorities will decide whether the worker should be fired or reinstated.

Article 2: Similar measures will be adopted against government employees who, with the above-mentioned purposes, use government vehicles, property, or equipment to carry out strikes or demonstrations. In general, the same measures will be applied against anyone using government property for purposes other than public service, not excluding the criminal or civil charges to which they may be liable.

Article 3: The personnel office of each of these government institutions will be responsible for enforcing this decree.

Article 4: This decree will take effect upon its promulgation.

Release and publish

Issued in Panama City on 20 March 1988

[Signed] Manuel Solis Palma, Minister in Charge of the Presidency

Azael Purcait, Planning Minister

Opposition on Possible Talks With Noriega

PA190312 Paris AFP in Spanish 0206 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Panama City, 18 Mar (AFP)—Opposition leaders today told AFP that they would agree to negotiate "a great political agreement," which would include the pledge not to try strongman General Manuel Antonio Noriega for drug trafficking if he leaves the country.

The sources, however, denied any knowledge that Noriega agreed to leave Panama after he reached an agreement with opposition leaders on Friday, as reported by U.S. television stations.

The opposition spokesmen emphasized their willingness to accept, within an agreement, the retention of "some privileges" for the military. The spokesmen admitted that "all negotiations must be made with the military, because they have the force and the arms and have been in power for 20 years."

In addition, Ricardo Aleman of the opposition Nationalist Republican Liberal Movement, MOLIRENA, told AFP that the Agrarian Labor Party, PALA, a member of the government coalition, officially invited several of the opposition parties, including the Civic Crusade, to speak.

Aleman also said that the government decree issued today declaring a state of emergency "constitutes a threat" against the enterprises that will go on strike next week, because this decree will allow the military to occupy the enterprises.

Negotiations Denied

PA210309 San Jose Radio Impacto in Spanish 2242 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Interview with Tomas Herrera, a Panamanian lawyer and National Civic Crusade leader, by correspondent Homero Londono in Panama City; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Herrera] We decided a long time ago that we would not negotiate with General Noriega because Gen Noriega cannot be trusted. He has lied in the past; he has not kept his promises; and we do not think he would do anything different at this time. If he did, it would be to confuse the people and win some time for himself.

We were very surprised last night when Televisora Nacional, the government television station, announced that negotiations were under way. This is not true. This was done with every intention of confusing the people. This is his strategy, and our strategy is not to negotiate with him. He knows he is losing ground, and that is why he is desperately seeking negotiations.

[Londono] This week we saw that the government and autonomous institution employees are not happy with the situation. What are your views regarding Monday's strike?

[Herrera] The people of Panama are very much aware of the problem. We have never forced anyone to join our strikes; we have forced no one. We are sure that this time the government employees will join the strike because they know the National Civic Crusade and the opposition parties are the only sectors, the only groups, that have the solution to the national problem. The government cannot resolve the problem. However, we can. The Panamanian people, the government employees, and the poor people know this.

[Londono] The total militarization of Panama City began on Wednesday. How do the Panamanian people feel?

[Herrera] Offended. I am no longer frightened by this situation. We are beginning to learn to live with this situation; however, we do not want to continue to live like this. They offend us; they are disregarding our rights. The military sector must be made aware that they cannot run the country by militarizing it. The country cannot function under that system. Our general strike is in response to the militarization. We do not want to be ruled in that manner, and we won't allow it.

[Londono] How do you feel about the recent looting of supermarkets and other stores?

[Herrera] Those actions were provoked by what the communists call the [words indistinct]. Those are people who lend themselves to this type of action. The government has done this before in an attempt to frighten businessmen. Businessmen are no longer frightened, and looting will not stop them.

[Londono] Do you feel the country is being ruled by a leftist government?

[Herrera] It is run by a government that only thinks about its own stomach [panzista]. There are many stomach communists among them.

Noriega Pilots on Cuban Arms Shipments

PA210008 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2349 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Washington, 20 Mar (EFE)—Two Panamanian military pilots who deserted this weekend and went to the United States today told EFE that Panama's strongman, General Manuel Antonio Noriega, "will die like Benito Mussolini" before leaving Panama. [passage omitted]

Majors Augusto Villalaz and Raul Adames, who arrived in Washington last night, said: "He has too many commitments and the United States' indictment on drug trafficking charges has cornered him and left no way out. Noriega does not trust anyone and believes he will be extradited, and he has said that he will only leave dead."

The two Panamanian military officers—pilots of Noriega's 727 and helicopter, respectively—revealed here that they had transported 41,500 kg of weapons from Cuba to Panama in the last 2 months on Noriega's instructions. [passage omitted]

Villalaz explained that "we delivered the weapons to Noriega's trusted officers in the military bases of David, Rio Hato, and Panama City."

Villalaz personally carried out three flights, the first in February and the other two on Monday and Tuesday, prior to the military coup against Noriega on Wednesday, 16 March.

"It was planned that we would carry out 16 flights to Cuba to bring approximately 225,000 kg of weapons, but the coup stopped the transportation activities," he stated.

Referring to the coup, 44-year-old Villalaz, who studied in Brazil and has served in the Panamanian Army 22 years, and 43-year-old Adames, who studied in Mexico

and has served in the Panamanian Army 18 and 1/2 years, explained that "70 percent of the majors, captains, and lieutenants in Panama City were involved in the foiled coup."

Villalaz said: "The coup failed because the officer in charge of controlling the general headquarters underestaimated Captain Giroldi, the officer in charge of the installation, and arrived unarmed. Capt Giroldi reacted quickly and controlled the situation with his troops." [passage omitted]

Country Requests SELA Meeting on U.S. Measures

PA182014 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1800 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Panama today asked the SELA Permanent Secretariat to call a special urgent meeting of the SELA's Latin American Council at the ministerial level to discuss the coercive economic measures imposed by the United States on Panama.

Panama's request is based on Decisions Nos 112 and 113 approved in August 1982 by the SELA Latin American Council, which condemn the imposition of coercive economic measures against any member state and which establish mechanisms for the region to respond.

The request, which was presented by Panamanian Ambassador to Venezuela Marcel Salamin to SELA Permanent Secretary Carlos Perez del Castillo, was accompanied by a report justifying the request. The report describes the seriousness of Panama's economic emergency, explains the coercive measures and their economic effects on the nation, and lists the violations of international law.

Printing Money Possibility

PA200033 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0230 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Caracas, 18 Mar (EFE)—The Panamanian Government is studying the possibility of issuing its own money, according to a document presented to SELA today by Panamanian Ambassador to Venezuela Marcel Salamin.

Salamin requested a special meeting of the SELA Latin American Council to discuss the impact on his country of the "coercive" measures imposed by the U.S. Government.

Salamin supported his request with a document that notes, among other things, the possibility that Panama might begin to issue its own money. The document states that if the Panamanian Government is forced to make this decision, it would request the cooperation of other Latin American countries in implementing the decision.

SELA sources assured EFE it has not received an official request to advise Panama on issuing its own money. The sources said the only document it has received on this subject is the one presented by Salamin.

Currency Plan Denied

PA201331 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1245 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] The Presidency of the Republic's Press Secretariat reports to the public that the government of President Manuel Solis Palma has to date not planned [planteado] to issue paper currency to replace the dollar as legal circulation in the Republic of Panama.

Point 18 of the conclusions of an official document presented before the organizations of the Latin American Economic System, SELA, specifies that Latin American and Caribbean support for the reconstruction of the banking, financial, and services system, which is the basis of our country's activities, will have special importance [interes]. It states that this system is being shaken by strong extraregional aggression.

The Republic of Panama's official document served as the basis for summoning a special meeting of SELA ministers in keeping with decisions 112 and 113, approved by the regional organization in August 1982. Such decisions condemn the imposition of coercive economic measures against member states and provides reaction mechanisms for the region.

Envoys to Dominican Republic, Argentina Ousted

PA190015 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2330 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Manuel Solis Palma, minister in charge of the Presidency, today annulled the appoinments of Luis Carlos Zarak as ambassador to the Dominican Republic and Roger Decerega as Panamanian ambassador to Argentina. Upon annulling the appointments of Decerega and Zarak, a state information office press bulletin stated that these steps have been taken to align the foreign service with the government's new policy.

Security and Defense Council Members Listed

PA181855 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1750 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Because we consider this news item of general interest, Radio Nacional will give the names of the members of the National Security and Defense Council

The president of the Republic, who presides over this council; the Presidency, Government and Justice, Foreign, and Planning and Budget Ministries; the commander in chief of the Panama Defense Forces; and the comptroller general. [passage omitted]

Delvalle Asks for European Support of Democracy

PA190118 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2344 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Madrid, 18 Mar (EFE)—Deposed Panamanian President Eric Arturo Delvalle today asked "the mother country and the other European nations" to support democracy and his people, "as they have always done."

In a brief interview with a Spanish television station, held at an unidentified place in Panama City, Delvalle also called Manuel Antonio Noriega, chief of the Panama Defense Forces, a "dictator."

The deposed Panamanian president also said that the United States has frozen the Panamanian Government's reserves on his "instructions."

He added that the United States has not staged a direct intervention in Panama only "to avoid hurting the Panamanian people."

In closing, Delvalle expressed his confidence in the prompt resolution of the Panamanian crisis with the fall of "dictator" General Noriega.

Delvalle 'Hiding' on U.S. Military Base

PA201600 Panama City LA REPUBLICA DOMINICAL in Spanish 20 Mar 88 pp1-A, 8-A

[Unattributed article: "The 'President' in Hiding]

[Text] In some military base in the Panama Canal area, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Florida, or the Carolinas, an individual who calls himself the president of Panama continues to order devastating actions against the country's economy, to show his blonde friends that he is the only person they can trust and that he is ready to do the impossible to offer them on a silver platter the elimination of the achievements the Panamanian people secured in the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, as the culmination of a generational struggle that began in 1903 at the same time we gained our independence from Colombia.

He is not a president, or a chief of state in hiding, because he does not even have a cabinet; he is not recognized by any of the Panamanian state powers or organizations; and he has not been able to muster any demonstrations or expressions of popular support.

He is simply the obedient executor of the instructions of Elliott Abrams, assistant secretary for inter-American affairs, and he faithfully fulfills his role to destroy the Panamanian economy, because he has his millions in U.S. banks and has the support of one of his offspring's fathers-in-law, Gabriel Lewis Galindo, one of his pals in action; and an obscure publicity man, an improvised diplomat, Alberto Garcia de Paredes.

The arrogant blondes of the north are today demanding the removal of General Manuel Antonio Noriega, the legitimate standard-bearer of Torrijism and the Panamanian nationalist struggle; and the return of the man who showed total contempt of the poverty-stricken sectors of this country and an olympic racism conceivable only in South Africa in the early stages of the 20th century.

If the political situation were to change in Panama outside of the constitutional context, no honorable, fighting Panamanian with blood in his veins would again accept Eric Arturo Delvalle as president of the Republic.

If in the past he was unable to show any merits of his own other than his money, his conduct that is today driving the people to misery deserves the repudiation of all.

It is well known that the contribution of the Republican Party in the 1984 elections was small and that Delvalle reached the presidency thanks to the benevolence of the Democratic Revolutionary Party, which he has tried to destroy since he began his administration.

The U.S. State Department should understand that the Panamanians will only accept a Panamanian solution to our problems and that the current economic-political crisis cannot be resolved with Delvalle's return for many reasons. We can stress, among these, the Panamanian people's rejection of him, the contempt he inspires within government and opposition members, and his well-known inability to face up to problems. Furthermore, the people know who wears the pants in his political actions, who thinks, writes, and speaks for him. His birth in a golden crib in "this country of blacks" does not grant him leadership and charisma, of which he is totally devoid. Delvalle's return to the presidency would signify the installation of the Southern Command in the Palace of the Herons or blind obedience to the Yankee ambassador.

It would also signify the loss of any vestige of independence and dignity for Panama.

Therefore, any such game is inconceivable.

PRD Urges Formation of 'Solidarity Committees'

PA190336 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 2225 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Communique issued by the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD); date and place not given]

[Text] A group of officers attempted to take over the FDP [Panama Defense Forces] central headquarters on the morning of 16 March. This was an isolated attempt that lacked support in the remaining FDP dependencies. After a short time, the coup's perpetrators were subdued and arrested by lower-ranking officers and sergeants of troops stationed at the central headquarters. There was no fighting or deaths.

The attempt was headed by Police Chief Colonel Leonidas Macias and had been predicted in a speech by former President Eric Arturo Delvalle, through the U.S. Army Southern Command television station and by a high official in that command.

The coup's perpetrators acted in coordination with Isaac Rodriguez, leader of a workers group in the institute that provides the country with electricity [Institute of Hydraulic Resources and Electrification]. While Col Macias withdrew police forces from the city and left it unprotected, Rodriguez organized street demonstrations and cut most of the country's electricity. The coup's perpetrators aimed to take advantage of the confusion caused by these events and request support from the U.S. Army against their own companions and Panamanians. The quick action of lower-ranking officers in the rest of the FDP dependencies did not allow them to develop this plan.

The country's situation has returned to normal, and President Solis Palma is fully carrying out his activities as head of government. As for our military, General Manuel Antonio Noriega continues his professional activities with wide support from the Torrijist officers.

Nevertheless, intimidation and risks caused by U.S. Army exercises in the Panama Canal area continue. These exercises, held with troops from Florida and Puerto Rico, are being conducted illegally, without Panama's official authorization, and in clear violation of the canal treaties. Likewise, brutal economic aggression by the U.S. Government against Panama continues. The effects of this aggression is causing very serious damage to the popular and national economy. Panamanians continue to be determined to defend the sovereignty, integrity, and self-determination of our country and to reject U.S. aggression and neocolonialist intervention.

Confronted with this dangerous situtation, and in view of the serious risks that these actions have for the rest of Latin America, we call on political parties and fraternal nations to constitute solidarity committees to support Panamanian sovereignty .

Signed by Nils Castro,

PRD International Affairs

Government Raps U.S. Honduras Troop Deployment
PA191806 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 0415 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] A communique issued by the Panamanian Foreign Ministry on behalf of the Republic of Panama, based on the principles and norms of international law, condemns the sending of U.S. troops to the Central American region because this action once again endangers the peace that people want and because it seriously threatens the security of all Latin American countries.

The communique notes that the stationing of 3,200 soldiers is an aggressive act and takes place at a time when there is border tension between Honduras and Nicaragua and is clear and unquestionable evidence of the Reagan administration's meddling in the affairs of the Central American people. With its policy of force, the Reagan administration is violating international law as well as norms of peaceful coexistence.

The communique states that considering there is a process seeking political agreement as a result of the Esquipulas II agreement, the attitude of the U.S. Government goes against the Central American governments' unbreakable decision to consolidate commitments to establish a firm and lasting peace in Central America.

The measure is especially grave because at this time the United States is also implementing brutal economic aggression on Panama and is carrying out unilateral military maneuvers, in absolute violation of the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, to intimidate the Panamanian people.

Argentina

Caputo Returns, Comments on UNSC Talks

PY202034 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1934 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Buenos Aires, 20 Mar (NA)—Today Foreign Minister Dante Caputo stated that the United Kingdom was in "a disadvantageous position" at the UN Security Council [UNSC] during the discussion of the Malvinas Islands issue. Caputo noted that from his point of view, Argentina "had achieved its goals" during the meeting.

Caputo said the Argentine delegation "would have liked to have heard a stronger U.S. speech" at the UN forum that is designed to preserve international peace.

The minister termed as "dangerous" the British decision to [words indistinct] the "Fire Focus" exercises. He also stated that Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher maintains "an extremely inflexible stand" that makes one believe [words indistinct] start negotiations with Argentina.

Caputo said that "a country cannot remain isolated forever, and sooner or later it will have to negotiate."

In a statement at Ezeiza airport upon his arrival from the United States, where he participated in a meeting of the UNSC, Caputo noted that "the five great powers were at that forum, but none of them spoke up for Great Britain."

He added: "during the informal meetings that were held later, we noticed a very broad consensus recognizing the big mistake the United Kingdom has made." [passage omitted]

Caputo refused to specifically answer whether he believed it was possible for Argentina to recover sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands while Margaret Thatcher remains in power.

The minister stated: "Regardless of what I think about this issue, the important thing is what we do, and in this regard I insist that London is in a very intransigent and isolated position."

He continued: "Mrs Thatcher has displayed an extremely inflexible stand. While this makes us believe it will be very difficult to negotiate with her, it must not discourage us. Quite the contrary—we must insist with more determination every day."

When asked about the possibility of resorting to the Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty (TIAR), the minister replied that "for the time being, we see no need to do so. However, we do not rule out the possibility."

After being asked whether the United States could modify its stand concerning the subject, he only commented: "I do not know. We shall see." Caputo added: "I would have liked to have heard a much stronger speech from the United States."

TIAR Note 'Ready' for Signing

PY190157 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 0103 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Buenos Aires, 9 Mar [date as received] (NA)—Today a high-ranking Foreign Ministry source affirmed that a note calling for a session of the Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty (TIAR), a mechanism used to repel aggression by extracontinental powers, is "ready to be signed" if tension in the South Atlantic increases due to the British maneuvers in the Malvinas Islands.

The source, who spoke with NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS from New York by telephone, stated that "the 20th consultative assembly of the TIAR has been open since 1982, and a simple note—which is on the desk ready to be signed—will bring this organization into session again." [passage omitted]

The return of Foreign Minister Dante Caputo is scheduled for 20 March at 1000. It is believed he will proceed immediately to the Olivos residence to personally inform President Alfonsin of the diplomatic steps that will be taken.

The source noted that in this respect, upcoming steps "are being kept secret." This is because if they became known, this would alert the British diplomatic sector. [passage omitted]

Communique Issued on C.A. Situation

PY182334 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2222 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 18 Mar (TELAM) —The Foreign Ministry tonight released a communique in which the Argentine Government makes public its concern over the increase of tension in Central America and the sending of troops to one of the countries of that region.

In view of this, the communique continues, Argentina reiterates the need for scrupulous respect for the principle of nonintervention, both by the five Central American countries and by those countries that have links or interests in the region.

The communique also indicates that these incidents once again demonstrate that the resolution to the Central American conflict is to be found in compliance with the commitments contained in the Contadora act and the Esquipulas II agreement. A stable peace in Central America is based on complete respect for nonintervention and the self-determination of the peoples with the full exercise of democratic rights.

The document concludes by stressing that the Argentine Government reiterates its willingness to contribute to achieving an easing of the tension and to achieving peace in Central America within the framework of the Contadora Support Group.

Air Force Squadrons Training in Atlantic Zone

PY211254 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1233 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Mar del Plata, 21 Mar (TELAM)—The squadrons of fighter planes of the 5th Air Force brigade, headquartered in Villa Reynolds, San Luis Province, are conducting training operations in the Atlantic zone, operating from Camet [Mar del Plata].

The operations involve 10 A-4B fighter bombers, with the logistical support of the Air Force base in Mar del Plata and that of helicopters from the 7th Air Force Brigade, headquartered in Morom, Buenos Aires Province, for possible search and rescue operations.

Montoneros Leaders Predict Social Struggle

PY181722 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1348 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Mexico City, 18 Mar (NA)— Montoneros leaders Fernando Vaca Narvaja and Roberto Cirilo Perdia in an interview published here named Aldo Rico, leader of the Monte Caseros military uprising, as an example of the "national" Armed Forces. They also predicted victory for the Peronists in the 1989 elections and "social struggle" in the 1990's.

Vaca Narvaja and Perdia, who are refugees from Argentine justice currently in exile in Cuba, made statements in Havana which were published here yesterday by PROCESO magazine. They said that in Argentina, apart from those who advocate coups, there are three schools of thought regarding the military issue.

They said: "One is the left and the organizations that defend human rights. From their antimilitary position, they are trying to reduce the Armed Forces to nothing by taking advantage of the discrediting of the 1976-83 dictatorship."

Another concept is the one "advocated by Alfonsin," which is in keeping "with the position of the Reagan administration. It calls for an Armed Forces which, after being purged of elements linked to repression, are to be modernized, allegedly to build highly professional, apolitical, and small but well-equipped," Armed Forces.

"The third concept," they say, "is ours: To try to enlist people into the Armed Forces or to make use of military personnel who have political awareness to play a nationalistic and popular role in the period of harsh social struggle that will probably begin in the country in the decade of the 1990's."

Perdia and Vaca Narvaja told PROCESO that after the overwhelming victory of the Justicialist Party in the 6 September gubernatorial and congressional elections, "it can be predicted that Peronism (with Antonio Cafiero or Carlos Menem as presidential candidates) will win the 1989 elections."

They added: "But because the national and international economic situations continue to be critical, the Peronist government will have a dilemma: either breaking with the internal and external financial power, and implementing a national and popular program; or postponing the aspirations of the people in order to gain the favors of the financial oligarchy."

The long-range strategy designed by the two leaders of the dissolved Montoneros organization is the following: "Once in the government and caught between the restrictions of the economic crisis and the demands of the popular masses, the government and the Peronist movement will have to define their position."

Therefore, "it can be predicted that early in the 1990's there will be a harsh period of social and political struggle within Peronism and throughout the country, which will again bring up the basic question: liberation or dependency."

Perdia and Vaca Narvaja believe that "this is the time when in order to make profound transformations possible, it will be necessary to have three elements that, according to Rodolfo Puiggros (former rector of the University of Buenos Aires and Montoneros leader who died in exile in Mexico), are essential for the revolution: masses, arms, and ideology."

Perdia and Vaca Narvaja said: "What we need is arms. For this reason and also for historic reasons, we advocate the participation of the Armed Forces in the process of national liberation."

The reporter pointed out to them the long history of "coups and repressive actions" of the Argentine Armed Forces, and asked them why they think that the Armed Forces "would join a popular nationalist project."

The two Montoneros leaders said: "The Armed Forces, which have not yet engaged in the self-criticism that they owe society, will also have to make a decision."

"Either they remain linked to minority social sectors—in a situation that would lead the country to a social confrontation and the Armed Forces to their destruction or dissolution—or they support a transformation process of a nationalist type," they said.

"In other words: Either the Armed Forces continue to play the role of domestic oligarchy police or they again become—as they were at the beginning of the Peronist

era— national Armed Forces, allied with the labor and business sectors to promote development and social justice," Vaca Narvaja and Perdia told PROCESO magazine.

They said that "overwhelmed by economic and budgetary problems, the Armed Forces have begun to reflect on the problems that affect our country, which for the first time they are experiencing, themselves."

They noted "for example, that noncommissioned officers recently came close to going on strike because of their low salaries; imagine what that would have meant: a complete break in the chain of command."

They added: "There is also the case of Lt Col Rico, who made a public statement during the conference of armies of the Americas in November in Mar del Plata. The important thing is to encourage and develop this necessary debate, so that in the future, the nationalist sectors of the Armed Forces may unite behind a strategy of power, of accumulation of forces."

The magazine said that for the two leaders, this strategy obviously "does not end with the Armed Forces; neither are the Armed Forces the key factor." In fact, they said that "revolutionary Peronism, which is a recognized—albeit minority—faction of the Justicialist Party, seeks to promote the integration and reunification of all leftist Peronist sectors—an effort which in the past was referred to as the 'revolutionary trend'—for the decisive times that we believe will come in the 1990's."

Alfonsin Meets With Algerian Official

PY190110 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1405 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 18 Mar (TELAM)—President Raul Alfonsin today received Hadj Slimane Cherif [name as received], the high commissioner for scientific research of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria, with whom he discussed aspects related to additional nuclear agreements.

The meeting took place at the Olivos presidential residence. Also present were Deputy Foreign Minister Susana Cerutti and CNEA Chairwoman Emma Ferreyra.

Economy Ministry's 'Reorganization' Announced

PY191548 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2333 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 18 Mar (TELAM)—Today it was officially reported that the executive branch has ordered the reorganization of the Ministry of Economy and created a new secretariat: the Economic Affairs Secretariat. This decision is an indication of the increased importance the government is giving to discussing and resolving economic matters.

Jorge Gandara was named to head the new secretariat. He was administrative coordinating and technical undersecretary until this point.

The new secretariat will include the discussion of matters under Gandara's former under secretariat, and the public sector salary policy.

According to Decree No 386, the reorganization of the Ministry of Economy was ordered to better satisfy current demands.

Some of the functions of the new secretariat include issuing proposals to solve the daily problems the Ministry of Economy has with different sectors of the economy, and to coordinate the different studies that seek to solve the current economic situation.

Gandara, who was appointed head of the new secretariat by Decree No 387, will be sworn in by President Alfonsin during a ceremony at the White Hall of Government Palace on 22 March.

The Ministry of Economy is now composed of the following nine secretariats and 22 under secretariats:

1. Economy Coordination Secretariat. It comprises the Economic Policy Under Secretariat and the Institutional Relations Under Secretariat.

2. Economic Affairs Secretariat. It includes the Public Sector Salary Policy Under Secretariat and the Administrative Coordinating and Technical Under Secretariat.

3. Finance Secretariat. It comprises the Taxing Policy and Administration Under Secretariat; the Budget Under Secretariat; the Foreign Debt, Internal Debt, and Treasury Under Secretariat; and the Provincial Relations Under Secretariat.

4. Mining Secretariat. It included the Mining Under Secretariat.

5. Regional Development Secretariat. It is made up of the Regional Development Under Secretariat.

6. Internal Trade Secretariat. It includes the Price Policy and Internal Trade Development Under Secretariats.

7. Industry and Foreign Trade Secretariat. It comprises the Foreign Trade Under Secretariat, the Export Policy Under Secretariat, the Industrial Development Under Secretariat, the Industrial Affairs and Modernization Under Secretariat, and the Small- and Medium-Sized Business Under Secretariat.

8. Fishing, Livestock, and Agriculture Secretariat. It includes the Agriculture Under Secretariat, the Livestock Under Secretariat, the Agrarian Economy Under Secretariat, and the Fishing Under Secretariat.

9. Cooperative Action Secretariat. It is made up of the Cooperative Action Under Secretariat.

Caputo Removes Official Over Disagreement

PY182220 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 18 Mar 88 p 4

[Text] According to diplomatic sources, Foreign Minister Dante Caputo has removed Raul Medina Munoz from the post of director of the Foreign Ministry International Organizations Department because he did not obey instructions to vote for the candidate that France had proposed to head the International Civil Aviation Organization.

These sources told the news agency DYN that the removal of the official appears to be the outcome of a number of disagreements between Minister Caputo and Jorge Mauhourat, the Foreign Policy under secretary, who was Medina Munoz' immediate boss.

The disagreements between Caputo and Mauhourat reached a critical point 2 weeks ago when the under secretary suggested to the minister that he withdraw as a candidate for president of the upcoming UN General Assembly because he did not have the necessary votes to achieve the top post of that international organization.

The same sources stressed that Medina Munoz and the rest of the ministry's directors decided to support the Indian candidate to head the International Civil Aviation Organization at the request of Teresa Flouret, Argentine ambassador to New Delhi, who based her request on the fact that India, together with Argentina, is a member of the Group of Six for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament.

The sources did not mention what will happen to the members of the International Organizations Department.

Brazil

Finance Minister Comments on Debt Payment

PY190024 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2255 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Brazil will not pay its foreign debt interest falling due in March if it does not reach an agreement with the creditor banks first, Finance Minister Mailson da Nobrega said today.

The finance minister today held a press conference for foreign journalists in Rio de Janeiro. The main subject was the foreign debt. He then spoke with Brazilian journalists.

[Begin Nobrega recording] Brazil has not formally lifted the moratorium. Our strategy is to pay the interest as long as negotiations are progressing according to our interests. We took such steps in January and February, and we are willing to do so in March if an agreement is reached. As for April and beyond, we will not make payments if we *do not* obtain appropriate financing from the international community. [end recording]

The finance minister also said the program for a new agreement with the IMF should be ready for the first half of April.

Meets Bankers in Caracas

PY211123 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Brazil has requested the creditor banks' support in order to reestablish economic growth and to renew confidence in the future of the country. Finance Minister Mailson da Nobrega has met with more than 100 bank managers in Caracas, Venezuela. He told them Brazil is going through a difficult transition problem in order to correct economic distortions.

He said that measures to control inflation and the public deficit must be adopted quickly, but without interrupting Brazil's economic growth. Minister da Nobrega is participating in an IDB meeting in Caracas.

Chile

RN President Sees No Agreement With Faction

PY191457 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1030 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Sergio Onofre Jarpa, president of the National Renewal Party [RN], has reiterated that there is no possibility of reaching an agreement with the group headed by Jaime Guzman.

Jarpa was clear in indicating that the decision made by Guzman, one of the vice presidents of the party, 24 hours before the party's internal elections was harmful to the party.

Jarpa said he cannot understand why Guzman suggested the resignation of the party's Executive Board. Jarpa added that there is full agreement in the party with regard to doctrine and the actions to be conducted in the future, which involve a commitment to the government to support the yes vote in the plebiscite.

RN President Jarpa said that the issues raised by the Guzman group will be reviewed by the party's court of honor probably on 21 March, unless other important events arise in the next few hours when the party's internal elections conclude.

The Guzman group, which used to belong to the UDI [Democratic Independent Union], refused to participate in the elections and called on its followers to not vote. The Guzman group obeyed the call except in Las Condes district, where one member of that group voted.

Jarpa said he cannot predict what punishment will be given to Guzman and to those who support him. He added that there is no reason to blame the RN General Secretariat if voting stations were not established in some districts because this was the responsibility of the presidents of each district.

He said the party must continue working and fulfilling the goals established when it was founded. It has to fulfill its commitment to support the candidate named by the commanders of the Armed Forces and Carabineros, and the RN must use all its ability for action and mobilization for the success of the plebiscite.

PCCh Creates National Mining Union Group

PY182139 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1700 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] In a very secret meeting, the results of which were made known in the last few hours, the outlawed PCCh created a national mining command called the National Mining Coordination [Coordinador Nacional de la Mineria]. Communist Leader Moises Labrana, who is head of the Marxist mining confederation, was appointed chief of this newly established labor organization.

Labrana, who immediately assumed his mysterious and clandestine position, said the confederation was created as a department of the self-styled Workers National Command (CNT). The CNT is headed by Manuel Bustos, a member of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), who is now visiting Australia.

The new organization, which is more than anything a figment of the PCCh's imagination, is allegedly controlled by the Copper Workers Confederation, which is led by the Communists, and by the Oil Federation, which is managed by the PDC. According to the PCCh, the new organization also comprises the Mining Confederation and the Pedro de Valdivia Labor Union No 5 [Sindicato No 5 Pedro de Valdivia] of the salt industry and has a total of 35,000 workers as its members.

Briefs

National Vanguard Party

The official gazette has published the announcement that the National Electoral Service has acknowledged the National Vanguard Party as a legally constituted party. The party complied with the requirements established by the Constitution and presented the signatures of 15,000 of its members for its legal registration. [Summary] [*PY191710 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1700 GMT 18 Mar 88*]

Colombia

Elected Mayor Released by Kidnappers

PA181400 Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1215 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Bogota—Antonio Hurtado Lopez, elected mayor of Gambita, Santander Department, who was kidnapped more than 30 days ago by presumed guerrillas, was released today northeast of Bogota. He was kidnapped on 7 February while heading to his town, where he was a mayoral candidate. Although he was elected during last Sunday's elections, he did not know it at the time of his release.

Hurtado Lopez was freed in La Florida neighborhood, northeast of Bogota, from where he took a taxi to a relative's home; he had been left hungry and without a penny by his captors.

The former hostage said he never knew the reason for his kidnapping, and had been blindfolded all the time.

Today, Hurtado Lopez will travel to Gambita, where his electors have prepared a special reception to welcome him.

ELN Inflicts Casualites on Armed Forces

PA181555 [Editorial Report] Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish at 1800 GMT on 17 March reports: "Lieutenant Cesar Galindo was killed in an ambush by a patrol of the self-styled Army of National Liberation [ELN]. Six soldiers and one civilian were also killed in that ambush." The date and place of the clash is not given.

The same station reports at 0000 GMT on 18 March: "An officer, a suboffícer, and three soldiers became casualties in another guerrilla ambush today. The military men clashed with the ELN on the Pozo Azul path, in southern Bolivar. Three guerrillas were killed and several wounded." The report adds that "nine military men were killed in Norte de Santander on 14 March."

Ecuador

Congressional Solidarity With Panama, Nicaragua

PA201355 Quito Radio Quito in Spanish 2300 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] The National Congress today expressed its solidarity with the Panamanian and Nicaraguan peoples, who are suffering from the Ronald Reagan administration's military and economic aggression. Ecuadoran Congress acting President Dr Fernando Guerrero said the parliament is concerned about this situation. He added that Ecuador will request the Central American issue be discussed at the upcoming Latin American parliament meeting scheduled for Santo Domingo on 7 April.

[Begin Guerrero recording] The Ecuadoran National Congress is deeply concerned about the Central American events. We believe Central America does not need guidance to decide its destiny. If we Latin Americans do not defend each other, we will be condemning ourselves to being nothing in the universe. The least a parliament such as the Ecuadoran parliament—which has always defended the most dear principles of sovereignty and integrity—could do is express its rejection of the economic aggression suffered by Panama. Aggression is achieved not only by using bullets, but basically when you want to starve people to death. This could also occur to us.

We must clearly express that following the actions in Panama, we then have the events occurring in Nicaragua, Honduras, and who knows where else.

I hereby want to state to the national and international public that Latin Americans will never remain silent. We have different characteristics, but we speak the same language; and we have the right to defend our institutions, our ways of living, and our being—as we did during the Malvinas crisis.

The Ecuadoran Foreign Ministry has already expressed its (?position) on the events occurring in Central America; therefore, the Ecuadoran Congress could not remain silent, and has to go a step further to express its solidarity with our sister nations. [end recording]

Peru

'Concern' Expressed on U.S. Troops in Honduras

PA181844 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Communique issued by the Information and Public Relations Office of the Foreign Ministry in Lima on 17 March]

[Text] 1. The Foreign Ministry hereby voices its deep concern over the decision adopted by the U.S. Government to send four battalions of rapid deployment military forces—comprising 3,200 specialized troops—to the Republic of Honduras as a result of the armed confrontations that have taken place within the last few days in the Honduran-Nicaraguan border area between members of the EPS and the irregular forces operating in that area.

2. The Foreign Ministry feels this unjustified increase in the U.S. military presence is a threat to the security of the states in the region, and affects the political atmosphere necessary for the adequate fulfillment of the peace agreements adopted by the five Central American chiefs of state during the recent Esquipulas II meeting held in Guatemala on 7 August 1987.

3. The Foreign Ministry fraternally and urgently urges the Honduran and Nicaraguan Governments, through direct and sovereign dialogue, to immediately reduce tension along their joint border, guarantee respect for their respective territories, and not use their territory for attacking another state, according to the commitments made during Esquipulas II.

4. Along with these commitments, the Foreign Ministry also demands the withdrawal of all foreign military forces from Central America and the end of all foreign aid and irregular forces and rebel movements operating in the abovementioned region.

5. The Foreign Ministry has been holding thorough consulations with the foreign ministries of the member countries of the Contadora and Support Groups, and has instructed its permanent representative at the United Nations to maintain close contact with the representatives of those countries with views toward coordinating action during the UN Security Council meeting to be held tomorrow concerning the described grave situation.

Lima, 17 March 1988,

Information and Public Relations Office

Foreign Ministry

Garcia Comments

PA201900 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 0100 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Interview with President Alan Garcia by unidentified reporters; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] In view of the current situation in Nicaragua, what are the possibilities of your visiting that nation?

[Garcia] I view with great concern that the U.S. Administration, the Republican administration of President Reagan, continues to make the grave mistake of intervening and making use of force and threats in the Central American area, which as part of Latin America can only resolve its problems through the will of its peoples. U.S. intervention cannot be concealed and is truly unacceptable. The Peruvian Government rejects it; the Peruvian Government strongly protests the presence of U.S. troops in Honduras, the military exercises being carried out, and the use of aircraft, such as the F-5, to bomb regions inside Nicaraguan territory. No power has the right or patent to intervene in the domestic affairs of Central America.

What has happened is that, after the meeting of the five Central American presidents, when a peace agreement was being drafted and dialogue was to take place between the Sandinist government of Managua with the contras—those who attack the Nicaraguan Government—imperialism stepped in to prevent an agreement on a cease-fire, a truce, from being reached. It is obvious that this has been done solely to prevent an agreement that was already under way. For several months, a peace

agreement has been in the drafting stage. Each day, this war costs hundreds of dead on the part of the Nicaraguan youths, of the irregular or contra forces that attack the Sandinist government.

This war has caused Honduras to lend part of its territory to these contras, and the United States has placed its special forces in Honduras. All of this is unacceptable. As Latin Americans, we are in favor of the dignity and sovereignty of Latin America, and we are definitively alongside the Nicaraguan people's right to free determination. They can argue that in Nicaragua there is no democracy as we understand it, but that is something else. Nobody gives the United States the right or patent to impose on any government the type of policy it must have. Consequently, we are alongside a small Latin American country, which is presently being manipulated and pressured, at the cost of the blood of its children, by the largest power of humanity.

[Reporter] Can this situation result in your visiting Nicaragua, Mr President?

[Garcia] If the circumstances warrant it. My conviction and that of all of Peru—which I am sure supports a poor, oppressed Latin American country, manipulated by imperialism and its military forces—is that if the moment demands it, as on other occasions, I must link action to words. The messages and cables of support from here are one too many. Peru is a poor but dignified country; it is a pilot country in the sovereignty of Latin America. As I have mentioned to President Ortega, if at any moment my presence is required to show Latin American solidarity with Nicaragua, I will be there, and I am sure that all Peruvians who know what liberty and sovereignty are, will accompany me.

[Reporter] Is there any threat of a break of diplomatic relations between our country and the United States, Mr President?

[Garcia] No, the threat is that things may not be settled well. Peru has the obligation to say things out loud. Just because those who currently govern the United States are powerful does not mean we will silence our Latin American voice of rejection, of firm repudiation. Who are the Americans to send their Marines, their troops, and their aircraft to Latin American countries? Who are they to impose on us the form of government we must have? We have a lot of respect for the U.S. people; I have a lot of respect for U.S. democracy, and the welfare they have achieved. But there are administrations that think Latin America is their own backyard and that they can do with it as they please. That historical policy that made many live on their knees has to end in Latin America. We may be poor, but we have a lot of dignity.

[Reporter] In that regard, do you think Latin America should stand up and defend its cause and its independence?

[Garcia] Latin America should be united. We are witnessing multiple acts of aggression. The United Kingdom is conducting contemptuous military maneuvers on the Malvinas Islands merely to arrogantly reassert its military hegemony. We see that almost 4,000 U.S. soldiers are being deployed. If I could speak to the U.S. people, I would tell them not to make the same mistake they made in the Vietnam war, which cost them almost 100,000 deaths and only resulted in a generation of frustrated and handicapped people and in a national trauma, because they were defeated by the Vietnamese people. I am sure the U.S. people, who are democratic and cultured, find absolutely alien this hegemonic concept, which is aimed at frightening the Latin American people by deploying troops. I call on all Peruvians to realize that this does not only have consequences in Nicaragua, but in all of Latin America. If we allow them to step on us in this manner, we will not have a place among the nations of the world, which should live in democracy, equality, and freedom.

[Reporter] The Reagan administration justifies the deployment of its troops to Honduras in view of the fact that Nicaraguan troops penetrated Honduran territory. What is your opinion of this?

[Garcia] We all know there are contra bases in Honduran territory. These bases belong to the mercenaries who fight the Nicaraguan Government with U.S. assistance and money. There are international principles that have flagrantly been violated here: the principle of nonintervention in the internal affairs of other countries, and the principle of nonaggression. How is it possible for the U.S. Congress to discuss whether to give $100 million or $300 million to those who are fighting the Nicaraguan Government? I have told this to all U.S. officials with whom I have spoken. If they think there are communist tendencies in Nicaragua, the only thing they are achieving by pressuring the Nicaraguan Government with their money and weapons is to push them into isolation from the rest of the continent and into increasingly radical positions. This has characterized U.S. foreign policy. We have said this here, in the United Nations, in Harare, and everywhere.

I believe Nicaragua is not Nicaragua; it is a part of Latin America. If all Latin American people do not unite, we will get nowhere on the foreign debt, international development, and the international trade issue. This is a time in which Latin America has to prove itself.

However, the U.S. people must know that they are in serious danger. Mr Reagan only has a few more months as president. The electoral campaign has begun in the United States. Mr Reagan cannot sink the United States into a new imperialist adventure like the one in Vietnam.

State of Emergency Extended in Provinces

PA181535 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1800 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] The government has extended the state of emergency for 60 days in several provinces of Apurimac, Ayacucho, Huancavelica, and Guanuco Departments

because acts of violence by the Shining Path continue. Constitutional guarantees continue suspended in the following provinces: Ayacucho Department—Gangallo, Huamanga, Huanta, La Mar, Victor Fajardo, (Huantancos), (Bicalguaman), and Sucre; Huancavelica Department—Acobamba, Angaray, Huancavelica, Tayacaja, Huaycara.

Shining Path Attacks Government Mining Camp

PA200409 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1814 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Lima, 19 Mar (DPA)—It was reported in Lima today that approximately 100 subversives of the Maoist Shining Path attacked a mining camp of the government's Centrominperu [Central Peruvian Minining Enterprise] and blew up a recently inaugurated coal mining project.

The attack took place at daybreak yesterday at the Yauricocha mining camp, located in the Andes, approximately 400 km east of Lima. The subversives first neutralized the project officers and workers, forcing them to lie face down on the ground and constantly threatening to kill them. The subversives then destroyed the mining camp's facilities.

Police Report 'Subversive Actions' by MRTA

Hucrachuco Police Station Hit

PA200108 Paris AFP in Spanish 0558 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Lima, 18 Mar (AFP)—A suspected column of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) on Wednesday attacked a police station in Hucrachuco, Huanuco Department, 400 km east of Lima, leaving two policemen and four subversives wounded, the regional police reported today.

This attack, which according to the Peruvian police is a sign of a resurgence in subversive actions in the Amazon region, occurred less than 24 hours after a Shining Path group ambushed a police patrol in Uchiza, San Martin Department. The ambush was confirmed in a communique released by the area's political and military command.

The surprise attack on the Hucrachuco police station by approximately 100 heavily armed subversives was repelled by a dozen policemen, who were well armed and made the rebels flee, said a police spokesman at Trujillo, La Libertad Department, north of Lima, near the scene of the incident.

High-ranking police commanders in Trujillo and Chiclayo (the latter is the capital of Lambayeque Department) sent police reinforcements by helicopter, because the police station is in a town surrounded by jungle.

Mine, Shell Office Attacked

PA210228 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1559 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Lima, 20 Mar (EFE)—Supposed members of the MRTA occupied a coal mine in the Andean region of Huancayo, seized explosives, and took two mine workers hostage, the police reported.

The attack on the mine coincided with an apparent intensification of actions on the part of the MRTA, which last night used explosives to attack the Lima headquarters of the Anglo-Netherland Royal Dutch Shell Oil Company, injuring two persons seriously and causing considerable damage.

Huancayo police said some 100 guerrillas, apparently from the MRTA, armed with automatic weapons, attacked the Cachi mining camp, 45 km from Lima. They made off with explosives and took as hostages two mine workers whose identities were not revealed.

The same sources reported the arrest of some 50 persons, supposedly connected with the subversive activities, in a series of raids carried out in Huancayo in the last few days.

The MRTA assumed responsibility, by means of telephone calls to several media sources, for last night's dynamite attack against the Shell offices in the Lima district of San Isidro.

A company carpenter and his wife were seriously injured by the explosion, which also caused considerable damage to the Shell offices and other offices in the commercial center.

The MRTA said it attacked the Shell offices to protest "the granting of new gas reserves," a reference to an agreement to exploit the Camisea deposits in Cusco, which was signed last week between the Peruvian Government and Shell.

Police sources said five members of an urban MRTA command were arrested yesterday in the Lima district of El Agustino after a shoot-out with police.

Authorities seized revolvers, pistols, rifle ammunition, dynamite, printed propaganda, and leaflets with instructions on how to make homemade explosives from a house.